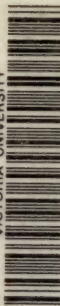


VICTORIA UNIVERSITY



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# HERE IS A RIVER



BV  
2370  
B72  
1905/06

1905-1906

A POPULAR ILLUSTRATED REPORT  
OF THE  
BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY



A KOREAN FAMILY READING THE SCRIPTURES.  
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THERE IS A  
RIVER

A POPULAR ILLUSTRATED  
REPORT OF THE BRITISH  
AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY  
FOR THE YEAR 1905-6

"EVERY THING SHALL LIVE WHITHER THE RIVER COMETH"  
—EZEKIEL xlvii. 9

THE BIBLE HOUSE,  
146, QUEEN VICTORIA STREET, LONDON, E.C.  
1906

BV

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1905/06

**EMMANUEL**

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4-3-12-

*East the forefront of habitations holy  
Gleamed to Engedi, shone to Eneglaim :  
Softly thereout and from thereunder slowly  
Wandered the waters, and delayed, and came.*

*Then the great stream, which having seen he showeth,  
Hid from the wise but manifest to him,  
Flowed and arose, as when Euphrates floweth,  
Rose from the ankles till a man might swim.*

*Even with so soft a surge and an increasing,  
Drunk of the sand and thwarted of the clod,  
Stilled and astir and checked and never-ceasing  
Spreadeth the great wave of the grace of God ;*

*Bears to the marishes and bitter places,  
Healing for hurt and for their poisons balm,  
Isle after isle in infinite embraces  
Floods and enfolds and fringes with the palm.*

F. W. H. MYERS.

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE

*Except where otherwise stated the incidents and statistics in the following pages belong to last year's record. It should be noted that this period is reckoned to end, as regards the Bible Society's foreign work, on December 31st, 1905; and as regards its home work, on March 31st, 1906.*

T. H. DARLOW,

*Literary Superintendent.*

THE BIBLE HOUSE,

August, 1906.

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# THERE IS A RIVER

## THE SIGN OF AQUARIUS

WHEN Pindar called water the best of things, the old Greek poet had a glimpse of the same idea which our English angler expressed in his own quaint phrasing. "The water," wrote Izaak Walton, "is the eldest daughter of the creation, the element upon which the Spirit of God did first move, the element which God commanded to bring forth living creatures abundantly. . . . The water is more productive than the earth. Nay, the earth hath no fruitfulness without showers or dews ; for all the herbs, and flowers, and fruit, are produced and thrive by the water." <sup>1</sup> This elemental gift of God reaches man variously, now dropping down from the bosom of the clouds, now welling up from a cleft in the rocks. But when we distinguish water in the mountain torrent or the stagnant pool from water which flows along a channel between banks, we use the word river.

What is there in nature more fascinating to watch than a great river ? Here is the one object on the face of the earth which seems stable and enduring while

<sup>1</sup> *The Compleat Angler, or the Contemplative Man's Recreation ; Chap. I.*

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every moment its very substance melts and glides away under your gaze. Year after year the river flows on, showing "the same giddy succession of silent power, the same whirling, irresistible labyrinth of rushing lines and twisted eddies, coiling themselves in serpentine race *in omne volubilis ævum.*" And with this mysterious strength of moving water there blends all the beauty of changeful colours and lights. Daily the brimming mirror reflects and repeats from the sky each mood of cloud or sunshine; and lies in the darkness "all Danae to the stars." Who can wonder that primitive men here felt themselves in the presence of some mighty living being—terrible in flood-time, beneficent in seasons of drought,—whom they worshipped as the god or genius of the river?

### Civilization and Rivers.

No student can fail to observe that the history of human civilization has been determined and controlled by great rivers. Throughout antiquity and down to recent times, they formed the main arteries of travel and traffic. Along these waterways traders spread their sails and plied their oars. On river banks or estuaries the earliest, stateliest cities have grown up. Names of immemorial streams like Tigris and Tiber, Arno and Rhine and Thames, carry magic in their syllables and evoke visions of earth-subduing empires. But in a still deeper sense we may say that rivers have created civilization. In torrid lands under the pitiless sun all vegetation withers and dies, apart from continual supplies of moisture. And in regions where the rains are scanty or intermittent, the soil becomes fertile only in so far as it is intersected and irrigated by rivers and streams. Thus

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in Bengal, for example, enormous areas would be sun-baked and barren for half the year, but for the Ganges and her daughter-tributaries. Hence in the East, where man's most imperious need is water, nomad tribes have contended for the possession of wells and springs as "diamonds of the desert"; and human civilization found its first home in the two great river-basins of the Euphrates and the Nile. The Bible itself opens with a picture of man's primeval paradise where the four-fold river existed to water the thornless garden of God.

Although the Holy Land embraces within its borders remarkable contrasts of climate, the country, as a whole, is by no means destitute of water. The annual rainfall in Jerusalem is still not much less than the annual rain-fall in London. And besides mountain torrents, Palestine has copious springs and fountains, welling up among the limestone hills. Its only genuine river, however, is quite abnormal in character. The Jordan hurries in tortuous course along an extraordinary fissure, lying below the level of the sea, and is useless alike for navigation and for irrigation. When the Jews spoke of a river, their thoughts turned naturally to the mightiest stream known to the ancient world, whose sacred flood fertilized the land of Egypt. We are apt to forget how naturally Egypt became a kind of background to Palestine—Egypt, which has been described as "the tutress of Moses, the hostess of Christ." The actual distance, as a bird flies, between Jerusalem and Cairo is not greater than the distance between London and Newcastle-on-Tyne. If the kings of Israel went down to Egypt for help, the imagination of Israel easily and innocently followed along the same track. To interpret many of those references to a river which occur in the Psalms

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and the Prophets of the Old Testament, we must realize the singular way in which Egypt is created and sustained by its river : the land of the Pharaohs is literally "the gift of the Nile."

### **The River of Egypt.**

No other river on earth has appealed so vividly to the wonder and curiosity of mankind. The cause of its yearly overflow, the mystery which shrouded its distant sources, astonished and baffled successive generations of the past. Only within living memory have men explored the true fountains of the Nile. But from the beginning a fair green, fertile strip of land has stretched along the banks of this life-giving stream, bounded on each side by bare sandy desert. Herodotus, the father of history, cites an oracle which defined Egypt as "the entire tract of country which the Nile overspreads and irrigates," and the Egyptians as "the people who live below Elephanta and drink the waters of that river." An English pilgrim in the fourteenth century, Sir John Maundeville, wrote down the result of his own observations and inquiries as he journeyed to the Holy Sepulchre :—

"Egypt is a long country, but it is narrow, because they may not enlarge it towards the desert for want of water. And the country is situated along the river Nile ; so that that river, when it flows, may spread abroad through the country. For it raineth but little in that country, and for that cause they have no water, unless it be by the overflowing of that river."<sup>1</sup>

Modern travellers and officials in Egypt have depicted this vital function of the Nile, which is as indispensable

<sup>1</sup> *The Book of Sir John Maundeville, Chap. 1.*





Photo lent by the Director General

ON THE UPPER NILE.

Sudanese Soldiers' Barracks at Mongalla.

[Survey Department, Egyptian Government

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to-day, under the *régime* of Lord Cromer, as it was under the earliest dynasty of the Pharaohs.

“Above the brown and blue waters of the broad, calm, lake-like river rises a thick, black bank of clod or mud, mostly in terraces. Green—unutterably green—at the top of these banks, though sometimes creeping down to the water’s edge, lies the Land of Egypt. Green—unbroken, save by the mud villages which here and there lie in the midst of the verdure, like the marks of a soiled foot on a rich carpet; or by the dykes and channels which convey the life-giving waters through the thirsty land. . . . We ride through green fields—green with corn and clover—avenues of tamarisk, fig-trees and acacia; along causeways raised high above the floods of the summer inundations. At every turn there is the grateful sound of little rills of living water, worked by water-wheels, and falling in gentle murmurs down into the fields or the canals. Beyond is the green again, and close upon that rise the yellow hills of the hazy desert.”<sup>1</sup>

When you climb to the top of the Great Pyramid, from its summit you can see a sharply-defined line, where the verdure ends and the bare sand begins. That line marks the precise limit of irrigation—according as it is written : *Every thing shall live whither the river cometh.*

### Living Water.

The Bible compares the grace of God again and again to living water. In our humid climate we miss the intense meaning which belongs to such a metaphor under the flaming Eastern sky, where man’s most imperious necessity is chosen as a figure for God’s redeeming love. Nothing exists which is more elemental than water. It cannot be manufactured by art; it comes to us as the

<sup>1</sup> Stanley : *Sinai and Palestine*, pp. xxxiv., xxxvi.

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unbought bounty of heaven. This idea gains added emphasis from more than one striking passage of Scripture. The earthly Jerusalem of the Old Testament was a mountain city, standing nearly as high above the sea as the summit of Cader Idris, and far from any river. It depended for its water supply on pools like Siloam and Bethesda, on the brook Kidron, and on Solomon's aqueducts. All the more vivid is the imagery of that vision where Ezekiel saw a river pouring forth from under the Temple threshold, and flowing down in healing streams to sweeten the Dead Sea. Such a supernatural river symbolizes the miracle of Divine grace, quite as clearly as the corresponding imagery of the Apocalypse—where the Christian seer beheld in the New Jerusalem a pure river of water of life, gleaming as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

### The Sacred Channel.

And, further, we may say that the Bible itself is one chief channel along which this living water flows to bless mankind. In the torrent of Ezekiel's vision Thomas Aquinas recognizes a picture of the flood of grace which burst forth from Calvary. Athanasius tells us that the rivers of God are the Gospels, filled with the promises of God and sent out to fertilize the earth. It is noteworthy that the first edition of the Douay Old Testament (1609-10) bears on its title-page these words :—"*Havrietis acqvas in gaudio de fontibus Seluatoris. Isaia 12. You shal draw waters in ioy out of the Saviour's fountaines.*" In Holy Scripture we have given to us a wonderful, inexhaustible river, unlike all other streams, rolling past our dwelling-places, rolling through the whole area of our life and experience, brimming with grace and truth,



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“Think of the responsibility of having such a river ! It is given to us : it flows past our feet : shall we let it pass, and die of thirst ?” Do we always remember that Bible-circulation must begin at home ? No spiritual life can be really rich and strong and enduring which does not draw deep, constant nourishment from God’s Book. On the other hand, a Roman Catholic like Faber exclaims, “See what giants of holiness they were, whose daily food was the mysterious simplicity of the sacred Scriptures !” The humble, Bible-loving Christian is he that was spoken of by the ancient prophet : *He shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green ; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.*

### Rooted by the Water-courses

What is true for individual believers holds true also with regard to Christian Churches. No Church can properly fulfil the function of a keeper of Holy Writ which does not repeat the Psalmist’s testimony, *Thy Word have I hid in mine heart.* Chrysostom’s confession is constantly being fulfilled : “Here is the source of all our ills, that we are ignorant of the Scriptures.” The Church Universal would be reformed and revived at once, its heresies would be ended and its divisions healed, if all Christians became children of the New Testament. And there is spiritual springtime in store for any Church, however blighted and barren it may appear, if only its members will stoop to drink of the river of God. *There is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the*

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*stock thereof die in the ground : yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.*

\*

\*

\*

If an astrologer were to search among the stars for some constellation as the emblem of the Bible Society, he might perchance discover it in that sign of the Zodiac which still goes by the name *Aquarius*—the mythical bearer and distributor of water. Divine providence has manifestly assigned to the Bible Society a corresponding office in the economy of modern Christendom—to serve as the Church's steward for translating and publishing and dispersing, in all tongues and in all lands, the one Book which all Christians accept as containing the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. The pages which follow will give glimpses of how this high and sacred function is being fulfilled in practice—how the water of the river is being stored up and conveyed by many channels and distributed abroad to the thirsty places of the earth.

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### AD FONTES

BEFORE the Bible can convey its proper message and impart its healing grace to any people, it must cease to be a stranger and foreigner in their midst. It must, so to speak, take out letters of naturalization in every land. It must become, in St. Paul's phrase, all things to all men—a negro with the negroes, a redskin among the redskins, a Mongol to the Mongolians, a Hindu to the Hindus. Only thus can the children of God, who are severed and scattered in the cloudy and dark day, learn their Father's message as though it had been spoken direct to them at the first.

"The Scriptures," cried Erasmus, "should be translated into all languages." How, otherwise, can they speak to every man's conscience and heart? Nothing less than this is involved in the Church's missionary duty to make disciples of all nations. And this side of the great Commission, though very far from accomplished, has not been altogether neglected and forgotten. We can praise God to-day in wonder and thankfulness, because some part at least of His Book lies open in over five hundred different languages of the world, which are understood by quite seven-tenths of mankind.

#### **The Feast of the Translation of the Bible.**

A quaint old Puritan author <sup>1</sup> has excellently expressed

<sup>1</sup> *William Gurnall : The Christian in Complete Armour, p. 588.*

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the gratitude which every Christian ought to feel as often as he opens the Bible in his mother-tongue.

“Bless God for the translation of the Scriptures. The Word is our sword; by being translated this sword has been drawn out of its scabbard. What use could a poor Christian, that hath but one tongue in his head (that understands but one language I mean, which his mother taught him) make of this sword when presented to him as it is sheathed in Hebrew and Greek? Truly he might even fall a-weeping with John at the sight of the sealed book, because he could not read it. O bless God, who hath sent men furnished, by the blessing of God on their labours and studies, with abilities to roll away the stone from the mouth of this fountain! And were it not sad to see the water of life brought to you with the expense of their spirits and strength, wasted in the work, to be spilled on the ground, and basely undervalued by you so as hardly to be in the catalogue of the mercies you praise God for? O, God forbid. It cannot be, if ever you had the sweetness of any one promise in it milked out unto you, or the power of one of its divine truths impressed on your hearts. Melchior Adam tells us that Bugenhagenius, whose assistance Luther had, with others, in translating the Bible, when the work was brought to a happy conclusion, was so affected with the incomparable mercy therein to the Churches of Christ in Germany, that every year he invited his friends to a solemn feast that day whereon the work was finished, which they called *The Feast of the Translation of the Bible.*”

### **The Task of the Bible Society.**

In accomplishing such results the Bible Society is the chief modern agent and instrument. The list of versions in which it has already helped to translate, print, or distribute the Scriptures includes as many as four hundred different forms of human speech. A hundred and two of these languages now possess the complete Bible. And





*Photo by*

A COUNTRY ROAD IN THE PHILIPPINES.

*Squires and Bingham.*

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to-day the Society is more deeply engaged than ever in its sacred enterprise. Translations and revisions of Holy Writ are being carried on at the present time in scores of languages, by the aid of scholars and linguists in all quarters of the world, organized for the most part under the Society's auspices and largely at its expense. The magnitude and the cost of such undertakings will appear from a few examples out of many which might be cited, did our space permit. Yet surely time and toil and money can be lavished on no worthier object than this—that God's Word shall speak with full clearness and sweetness and simplicity to each kindred and tribe among men.

### **Eager for the Bible.**

The publication last year of the Old Testament in Tagalog, which is spoken by about two million people in the Philippines, marks the completion of the first entire Bible issued in any vernacular of this archipelago. The volume received an extraordinary welcome at Manila. A deaconess at the training school writes: "My pupils danced for joy as they hugged the books." The *Philippine Christian Advocate*, the organ of the Methodist Episcopal Church, thus describes the arrival of the edition:—

"The volume is attractive in shape and binding, and sells at the astonishingly low price of thirty-five cents. . . . The first shipment of a thousand copies is all sold. Two or three times that number could have been sold in Manila alone within a week of their arrival, and the provinces would still remain untouched. At our Book-room the demand has been far beyond the supply. Some wanted five, some ten, and several wanted a hundred copies, and were insistent in their

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requests. In order to distribute the books as widely as possible we refused to sell more than five copies to any one person. It will take many thousands of copies before this thirst for the Word of God may be even partially quenched. To those who have always had an open Bible and have seen the Bible treated with indifference by so many, the sight of these people, feverishly eager to secure these first copies of the Old Testament in their mother-tongue, is truly pathetic."

### **The Hindi Old Testament.**

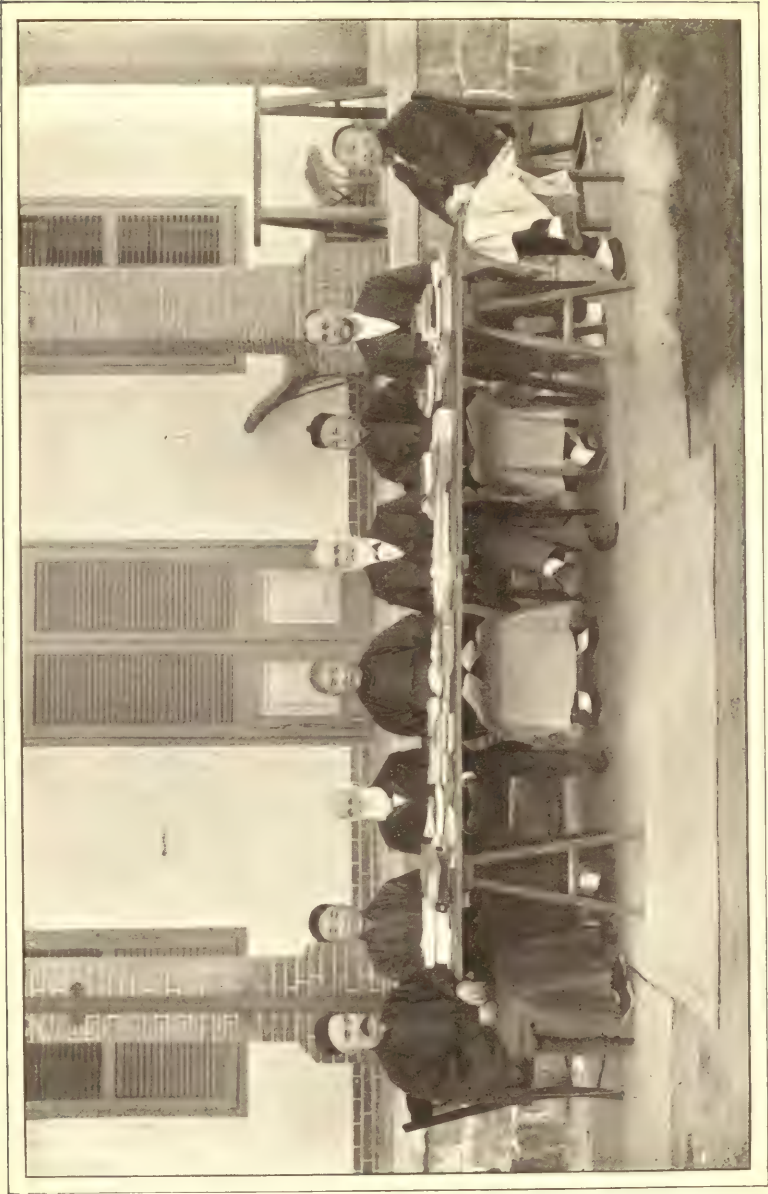
The new translation of the Hindi Old Testament, the printing of which was completed in November, 1905, was initiated by the Society as long ago as 1893 by means of a commission, consisting of three expert linguists representing different Missions in North India. The first draft was completed at the close of 1898. The next year was given to a careful revision, and the new version was put to press early in 1900. Finally the whole underwent a further careful revision from 1902 to 1905, in order that nothing should be left undone which reverent and consecrated scholarship could accomplish. The immense importance of this work becomes apparent when we remember that Hindi, in one or other of its many forms, is the mother-tongue of more than 87,000,000 of the people of India.

### **The Mandarin New Testament.**

To meet the needs created by divergences of speech in China, the Bible, or some part of it, has been already issued in over twenty different versions. Of these by far the most important is the Mandarin version, which appeals to as many as 200,000,000 people. A committee







THE REVISERS OF THE MANDARIN NEW TESTAMENT, IN SESSION AT CHEFOO, 1905.

This version is being prepared for 200,000,000 of the inhabitants of China.

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of scholars, appointed by the Conference of Protestant Missions in China, has been engaged for years in the task of producing a Union version in Mandarin, and expects to complete the New Testament during the summer of 1906. The main expense of this undertaking is defrayed jointly by the B.F.B.S., the N.B.S.S., and the A.B.S.

### **The Accra Bible.**

To give some idea of the cost which a revision of the text entails, we may mention that the Accra Bible—which is used by the Basel and the Wesleyan Missions on the Gold Coast—has been revised during the last three years. Although the Basel Mission defrayed certain charges, this work has cost the Bible Society £1,176, quite apart from expenses of printing and publication.

Revised New Testaments are now ready in Urdu, and in the Zanzibar form of Swahili. Other revisions, as important as they are difficult, are in progress. They include such various tongues as Icelandic, for Lutheran subjects of Denmark; Sloven and Portuguese, for Roman Catholics in Austria and in Brazil; Bulgarian, for Slavs; Bengali and Kanarese, for Hindus; Burmese and Chinese, for Buddhists and Confucianists; Chuana and Kafir for natives of South Africa.

### **In Greek, Syriac and Hebrew.**

Nor have the ancient versions and the original texts of Scripture been forgotten. The Greek Testament, edited by Dr. Nestle for the Society in 1904, has passed into a third edition, and wins wide acceptance: we hear, for example, that copies were purchased last year at our depôt in Smyrna by the Principal of the Theological

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School which the Orthodox Greek Church maintains on the island of Patmos. The Four Gospels in the ancient Peshitta Syriac, as edited for the Delegates of the Clarendon Press by the late Mr. Pusey and Mr. Gwilliam, are now issued by the Society in cheap, convenient form. And last, but not least, the learned and venerable Dr. Ginsburg has placed at the Society's service the results of his further collation of the Massorah during the last twelve years—in order that it may publish, under his editorship, a Hebrew Old Testament, which will exhibit the latest known alternative readings of importance.

### Eleven New Languages.

During the year ending March 31, 1906, eleven new languages were added to the Bible Society's list. Four of them belong to Asia, three to Africa, three to Oceania, and one to America. The names of these strange tongues are Singpho, Kuliviu, Mech (or Kachāri), Zigūla, Ladakhi, Laotian, Saa, Bemba, Egyptian Colloquial Arabic, East Santo, and Bribri. How many of our readers can say off-hand where more than one of these are spoken? A brief account of the peoples for whom these new versions are intended will illustrate the nature of the Bible Society's linguistic function, and the vital service which it renders to Missions in every corner of the earth.

### Singpho.

Singpho is the northern dialect of the language which is often known as Kachin (or Kakhyen). The people speaking it, whose number has not been ascertained, reside in the hills to the far east of Assam, on the upper waters of the Irawadi, near and on the further side of the Chinese frontier. In 1896 the late Robert

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Arthington sent out two missionaries to take up work among these people. One missionary, Mr. T. M. Johnson, began to translate the Gospels into their language ; and since his departure from Assam, his version of St. Luke, St. John, and the Acts has been carefully revised by a native Christian. These three books are now in course of publication by the Bible Society, and the Arthington Trustees have agreed to defray the cost.

### **Mech.**

Mech (or Kachāri) is a dialect understood by about a quarter of a million people, living on the plains of North Assam, at the foot of the hills. St. Mark has been translated into this tongue by the Rev. W. Bechtold, of the Church of Scotland Mission, who began his study of the language thirty-six years ago and is the only man at present able to make such a version. The greater number of the Mechis live in the Goalpara district, where American and English Baptists are proposing also to commence operations. With Assami-speaking people on the one side and Bengali-speaking people on the other, the Mechis are familiar with Bengali characters, so the Gospel will be produced in these, instead of in Roman characters to which the people are strangers. It is proposed to print an edition of 1,000 copies, to be sold at one *pice* ( $\frac{1}{4}$ d.) per copy. According to Sir Richard Temple<sup>1</sup> the Kacharis, who only understand barter, have such rudimentary ideas of relative value that the British courts in Assam have drawn up a scale of fines and incomes in terms of the domesticated animals kept by these people: *e.g.*, a man's income is assessed not at Rs.10 but at a big buffalo, and a fine is fixed at a cock and two small hens.

<sup>1</sup> *Lecture on the Evolution of Currency and Coinage.*

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### Zigula.

The Zigūla people, for whom our Society has undertaken to print St. Matthew's Gospel, live in German East Africa, and cover a large area of the hinterland opposite and north of the island of Zanzibar. Missionary work was first begun among them in 1891 by Bishop Smythies, of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa, who built a station at Korogwe, about thirty miles from Magila in the Bondei country. When the Bishop first visited the region and saw so populous a district without a single Christian missionary, he determined to open work there as soon as possible. A plot of ground was given by the chiefs, and then a few mud houses with a school and church were quickly built. Great progress has been made, and now a district some seventy miles east by west, and forty miles south by north, is under the influence of the missionaries, who have already twenty-three mission schools and about nine hundred scholars. It is difficult to estimate the total population, but large villages of from one to two thousand people are common. St. Matthew's Gospel has been translated into Zigūla by the Rev. W. H. Kisbey, of the U.M.C.A., who has worked among this tribe for the last ten years.

### Laotian.

St. Matthew and St. John have been translated into Laotian by M. Gabriel Contesse, a Swiss missionary at Song-Khone, Annam. From that centre he works among the tribes who occupy south-central Siam and spread eastward into the interior of French Indo-China. At Song-Khone probably half the people can read. The Laotian alphabet possesses twenty-six consonants and fourteen vowels. The characters in which this alphabet

## THERE IS A RIVER

is written are peculiar to the South Laotian people, who use them for ordinary literature and correspondence. Special matrices, therefore, had to be made, from designs supplied by native scribes, and from these the needed Laotian type has been cast. It is thus possible to print the two Gospels which are ready, and M. Contesse will read the proofs during his furlough in Europe. This Laos character is somewhat akin to the Shan character, though in the latter language there is no fixed standard of calligraphy; authors who write in Shan usually preface their books with a specimen of the alphabet they propose to employ.

### **Kuliviu.**

Among the many languages current in the New Hebrides Kuliviu is spoken in one of the Maskelyne Islets, which lie at the south-east corner of Malekula, about sixteen miles from Aulua. The Rev. J. Watt Leggatt, of the Presbyterian Mission, who has prepared the translation of St. Mark's Gospel, writes:—

“This has been in hand for two years, done on my visits to Kuliviu, assisted by the lads who were at Aulua for instruction last year. It was revised finally by the teachers and by a lad named Assumb-leh-leh, who has lived for three years at Aulua, and knows that language as well as his mother-tongue. As to payment, these people are but a small flock, and the absence of fresh water on their island renders it difficult for them to make arrowroot (their chief article of commerce). But although payment may be spread over a number of years, the Society will not suffer loss. I mention this more to save our self-respect than to influence the Bible Society, which has never failed to help us.”

### **Other New Languages.**

*Ladakhi* is spoken on the borders of Western Tibet by

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natives of Leh and the surrounding snowy region, who live at an altitude of 11,200 feet above the sea. St. Mark's Gospel has been translated into this tongue by the Rev. A. H. Francke, one of the Moravian missionaries at Leh. *Bemba* is the speech of the Awemba, a tribe to the north-east of Lake Bangweolo, which is associated with the name of Livingstone. A version of St. Mark has been prepared by L.M.S. missionaries in British Central Africa. St. Luke's Gospel is being prepared in *Colloquial Arabic* for the unlettered Egyptians who do not understand the classical form of that language. On the island of Mwala, in the British Solomon Group, *Saa* is the name of one of four mutually unintelligible dialects used among the thirty thousand inhabitants. The four Gospels and Acts in *Saa*, translated by the Rev. W. G. Ivens, have been printed for the Melanesian Mission. *East Santo*, another tongue current in the polyglot New Hebrides, is the English name for the dialect of the Sakau district of the island of Espiritu Santo, in which St. Mark's Gospel has now been printed for the Presbyterian Mission. *Bribri* is the name of an Indian tribe of Central America, near the Isthmus of Panama. In their language *beri* means "brave," and Bri-bri is a contraction of Beri-beri, signifying "very brave." For this tribe the Society has translated and printed St. John's Gospel.

### **E pluribus Unum.**

In barbarous regions we often find the population split up into hostile fragments as a result of long-standing tribal feuds. Each township lives aloof from its neighbours, and holds hardly any intercourse with outside folk. Hence in each district a separate and distinct dialect grows up, and men find it difficult to understand each







Photo by]

ABORIGINES OF SOUTH SANTO, NEW HEBRIDES.

[Rev. Dr. Gunn.

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other though they live only twenty or thirty miles apart. To take an extreme instance : in Malekula, a small island of the New Hebrides, so many different dialects are spoken that no fewer than five different versions of the Gospel have been found necessary. One practical function of the Bible Society is to unify as far as possible these local varieties of speech, which have little philological value and only perpetuate old quarrels and divisions.

In the early stages of missionary enterprise tentative versions in similar neighbouring dialects cannot be avoided. Thus, in Nigeria, translations are already published in three different varieties of Ibo. The complete Bible is now issued in Niger or Upper Ibo, for the C.M.S. Mission at Onitsha. Parts of the New Testament have been printed in Isuama or Lower Ibo, for use in the Delta Pastorate. A Gospel in a third Ibo dialect spoken at Ungwana, on the Cross River, has also been published by the U.F. Church of Scotland Mission. The Bible Society has just undertaken to prepare, if possible, and publish one unified Bible for the whole of the Ibo-speaking people in Southern Nigeria, and has arranged—at a cost of £750—that Archdeacon Dennis, of the C.M.S. Niger Mission, shall supervise this difficult task, for which no other linguist possesses such pre-eminent qualifications.

### **Prayer and Pains.**

The complete Bible in a heathen tongue ! Do we realize what a world of consecrated toil this represents ? Behind the finished Book lie its earlier sections, the New Testament or the Psalter or one or two Gospels ; behind these, again, lie the first attempts at the Lord's Prayer

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and a few scattered texts, and behind all lie the reduction of the language to writing and the preparation of grammar and dictionary. The Bible learns to utter God's thoughts in a new tongue as a child learns to talk. First in broken words which gradually gain shape and distinctness; then in sentences which, though disjointed at first, grow more and more closely connected, till ultimately the child's words become a moderately complete vehicle of his thoughts. Such was the life-history of the first complete Bible in a heathen tongue, prepared by the earliest Protestant missionary, John Eliot, one of the Pilgrim Fathers. He began to study the Massachusetts language about 1643, with the help of an Indian living with Mr. Richard Calicott, of Dorchester, who was taken in the Pequott wars. Soon the infant Massachusetts Bible began to learn its new lesson, and growing day by day, stood forth before the world in 1663 in all the dignity of complete manhood. At the end of his Indian grammar Eliot lifts the veil from the history of this Bible and tells us a little of what it cost.

“I have now finished what I shall do at present : And in a word or two to satisfie the prudent Enquirer how I found out these new wayes of Grammar, which no other Learned Language (so far as I know) useth ; I thus inform him : God first put into my heart a compassion over their poor Souls, and a desire to teach them to know Christ, and to bring them into his Kingdome. Then presently I found out (by Gods wise providence) a pregnant witted young man, who had been a Servant in an English house, who pretty well understood our Language, better than he could speak it, and well understood his own Language, and hath a clear pronunciation : Him I made my Interpreter. By his help I translated the Commandments, the Lords Prayer, and many Texts of Scripture : also I compiled both Exhortations and

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Prayers by his help. I diligently marked the difference of their Grammar from ours: When I found the way of them, I would pursue a Word, a Noun, a Verb, through all variations I could think of. And thus I came at it. We must not sit still, and look for Miracles: Up, and be doing, and the Lord will be with thee. *Prayer and Pains, through Faith in Jesus Christ, will do any thing.*"

John Eliot's experience has been reproduced in the lives of many subsequent translators, whose prayers and pains, coupled with their faith, have removed mountains of difficulty and opened out a way for the voice of God to hearts hitherto unconscious of its loving tones. This noble self-sacrifice and heroic drudgery of the translators, coupled with the magnificent devotion of those who have carried the Book in their hands and the generosity of those who have provided the funds, make the work of the Bible Society incomparably sacred. Such gifts are indeed sanctified by the altar.

### In Search of a Word.

What this task of translation sometimes involves may be best illustrated by a practical example. An American missionary in East Africa, the Rev. W. R. Hotchkiss, has just published a volume, *Sketches from the Dark Continent*. For years he was engaged in reducing to written form the language of the tribe among whom he laboured, and he thus describes one of his difficulties and triumphs:—

"For two years and a half I was baffled in my effort to obtain one all-important word. But it was the word that has belted the world with praise; the word that brings order out of the chaos of man's vain search after God; the sweetest word ever spoken by human tongue; the word which is yet destined to make dark Africa light in the Lord. That word

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was 'Saviour.' In mountain-like proportions it loomed up before me in my thoughts by day and in my dreams by night.

"Brother Kreiger—labouring in another tribe—had been badly torn by a lion some weeks before this, and Kikuvi, being with him at the time, was the means of his rescue. I felt that the word must come now, and two years and a half of disappointment were put into the eager attention with which I followed his story of the encounter. But he went through the whole scene most eloquently, and concluded, even to his having frightened the lion away, without using a word which I could construe to be the one sought after. Finally, however, just as I was about to give up again in despair, in a modest sort of way he remarked, *Bwana nukuthaniwa na Kikuvi* (The master was saved by Kikuvi). I could have leaped for very exuberance of joy; but, being afraid of losing my precious possession, I immediately changed the verb from the passive to the active form, and said, *Ukuthania Bwana?* (You saved the master?) This proving correct, I said, 'Why, Kikuvi, this is the word I've been trying to get you to tell me these many days, because I wanted to tell you that Jesus, the Son of God, came——' 'Oh yes,' he interrupted, and the black face lit up as in the lurid light of the camp fire he turned to me, 'I see it now, I understand! Jesus came to *kuthania* (save) us from our sins, and to deliver us from the hand of *Muimu* (Satan).'

"Never did sweeter words fall from mortal lips. The treasure had been discovered at last, and weary prospector, lighting suddenly upon rich gold reef, never felt keener emotions than did the lonely missionary when, for the first time, he was able to frame that matchless word 'Saviour' in a new tongue."

### The Lotos-flowers are not the Nile.

This line of thought leads us to a further and final position of the utmost importance. Even crude and imperfect versions of Scripture prove vehicles of spiritual grace and truth. God's eternal message can come home

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to men's hearts in spite of defects in its literary medium. We may appeal here to the witness of the eloquent and venerable Primate of Ireland<sup>1</sup> :—

“One thing is certain. It is not by their style that the Four Gospels do their work ; not even St. Luke's Gospel, with its undeniable superiority in this respect. It has been repeatedly said of late that the Gospels (in common with other parts of Scripture) enjoy what may be called an unfair advantage in the simple majesty and noble rhythm of our English Authorised Version. But it cannot be supposed that all other languages have been in a spontaneous conspiracy to elevate the sacred books beyond their proper level in the opinion of civilized humanity. Yet, as far as one can judge, no fainter impression of the work and character of Jesus Christ is made upon the people of other lands by their inferior versions. The majesty and beauty of the Man is not a sum-total proportioned to the sum-total of the majesty and beauty of the style in which His earthly life is described. The spiritual nobility of the first is absolutely incommensurable with the intellectual nobility of the second. It is the image of Jesus which tinges, which radiates through, the wrappings of style, as the sunset through a swathe of clouds. Infinite love and wisdom struggle through words which not seldom are poor and broken enough. It is not human genius masquerading, playing at Divinity in divinely beautiful language. It is Divinity condescending to veil itself partially in ordinary speech for its own high ends. Our belief in the truth of the narratives is more entire when they are told with such sacred negligence of rhetorical and literary embellishment. In the Gospels Christ comes to us, and we may go to Him, almost as in His sacrament. In the great words of the old martyr Tertullian, whose broken Greek has sometimes such singular power—‘We fly for refuge to the Gospel, as to the flesh of Jesus.’”

<sup>1</sup> *Leading Ideas of the Gospels, by the Archbishop of Armagh, pp. 18-19. Edition 1892.*

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### TO WATER THE EARTH

WHEN we claim the Bible as the Charter of Christian Missions, we do not base that claim merely on certain familiar commandments and promises—immortal though they be. We imply rather, as the Bishop of Birmingham has expressed it, that there is nothing more integral to the New Testament than the doctrine that every race of mankind must be brought within the scope of the Gospel. Christianity has its being as a propaganda; it corrupts whenever it stagnates into a tradition. The living water must flow onward in perpetual streams, to vivify and fertilize the waste places of the world. Only in so far as Christianity has become Catholic, in this wide sense, have its great results and meanings emerged, and its latent energies and possibilities disclosed themselves. Only the Missionary Church, going out into the wilderness to bring home lost sheep, can properly realize or represent the Eternal Shepherd.

#### **British—**

In the spring of this present year a Blue Book appeared for the first time containing a "Census of the British Empire." No modern document can be more significant and impressive to British readers. The facts and figures which it sets forth bewilder the imagination,







*Photo by*

**SULPHUR GATHERERS IN EAST JAVA.**

The Sulphur is collected from the Craters of extinct and active Volcanoes.

*[Zalisscedel, Soerabaja.]*

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The name "British" now covers nearly a hundred times the area of the United Kingdom, and our fellow-subjects include a quarter of the whole human race. King Edward VII rules over four hundred millions of mankind, only a small minority of whom are white. Of these enormous multitudes more than one-half profess the Hindu faith, almost one-fourth are Moslems, and hardly one man in seven can be classed as even nominally Christian.

Such overwhelming numbers bring home to us a solemn sense of God's calling and election, which have thus entrusted to Britain the headship and guidance of so huge a fraction of the world. Surely it must humble us profoundly to feel this burden laid upon our people. Surely we who are Christians are doubly bound to send the Gospel to our own fellow-citizens.

### **And Foreign.**

Yet again, if "British" means much, "Foreign" means far more. The Bible Society's title proclaims that its enterprise can recognize no frontier. Its mission is oecumenical and universal—like the Book which it exists to carry into all countries and kingdoms. And that mission will be fulfilled when in every land God's redeeming Love speaks to every man in his own tongue in which he was born.

The Bible Society exists as the great indispensable partner of all Foreign Missions. It provides them with nearly all the versions and editions which they use in their varied work; and it does this on such terms that the books practically entail no expense to the Boards and Committees of the Missions which obtain them. With each new baptism of missionary zeal, each forward

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movement in missionary progress, the Bible Society is bound to expand and advance. Every fresh tribe evangelized, every fresh convert won, implies a new demand on the resources of the Bible House—where, be it said, no properly authenticated request to print a version of the Scriptures has ever yet been refused. On the other hand we heartily acknowledge that the missionaries of every Reformed communion, in happy reciprocity, furnish the Society with many of its most accomplished translators, its most effective distributors, and its most convinced and convincing advocates.

### **The Witness of Experience.**

Those who have longest and widest experience of the problem declare most emphatically that for a Christian Mission to succeed it must possess and popularize the vernacular Scriptures. To the vital service which the Bible Society renders in this respect, the chorus of testimony deepens every year. We need cite only a few out of many recent witnesses. After forty-three years' labour for the S.P.G. in Burma Dr. Marks could say at our last Exeter Hall Anniversary :

“The Bible Society gives me Bibles in Burmese, in English, in Chinese, in Japanese, in Hindostani, in Tamil, and in Karen. If we are the soldiers of the Cross, if we are to go out into all lands, in accordance with our Master's command, surely this Bible Society is the arsenal at home from which we are to draw our ammunition, if I may use the word, from which we are to draw our resources, and those who are in command of this arsenal have been most liberal to us.”

Mr. Montagu Beauchamp was one of the “Cambridge Seven” who volunteered together for foreign service

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in 1885, and proved the instruments of a memorable revival of missionary zeal. After twenty years' service in connection with the C.I.M. he writes : "It is a great joy to the China Inland Mission to be so closely allied with the work of the Bible Society ; indeed, one Society could hardly exist without the other."

In April, 1906, the missionaries of the South Africa General Mission, labouring in Swaziland, Natal, Zululand, Pondoland, Bomvanaland, Tembuland, and British Central Africa, met in conference, and at the suggestion of their chairman, the venerable and beloved Dr. Andrew Murray, unanimously expressed "their high appreciation of the consistently generous help received from the Bible Society, more especially in reference to the liberal interpretation of its own principle of sale, in preference to a system of gratuitous distribution."

In July, 1906, a conference, representing seven different Missions at work in Rhodesia, was loud in its confession of indebtedness for the generous assistance the Bible Society had always given, and unanimously recommended that an annual collection for the Society's funds should be made at all the central mission stations in Rhodesia.

At a recent meeting the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of England agreed to record their thanks to the Bible Society for its generous help rendered to the Synod's Mission work in China and Formosa, by putting under the superintendence of their missionaries colporteurs whose salaries and expenses are met by the Bible Society.

Speaking at Port-au-Prince in May, 1906, the Bishop of Trinidad repeated the testimony that apart from the Bible Society the missionary work of the Anglican Church would be impossible.

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### For the U.M.C.A.

Writing in *Central Africa*, the monthly magazine of the Universities' Mission, the Bishop of Zanzibar describes a recent journey he took in the mainland portion of his diocese, and speaks of visiting for the first time a new station in the Usambara Hills called Kigongoi.

"Here I spent a quiet ten days in a beautiful climate and in a beautiful country. On the Sunday I saw all the classes of hearers and catechumens. It is a district where several different tribes meet, and in one room a class of some twenty-five was being taught in the Shambala language ; in the next room a class nearly as large was being taught in the Taieta language ; in a third another class of Digo people were having instruction in Swahili, and some Bondei catechumens were being taught in their own tongue. The services in church are in Swahili."

Such a polyglot station vividly illustrates the indispensable aid rendered to the missionary by the Bible Society. The Bible Society has published St. Luke's Gospel in Shambala, three Gospels in Bondei, and the complete Bible, translated by Bishop Steere and his helpers, in Swahili.

### For the C.M.S.

The C.M.S. has drawn from the Bible House versions of Scripture in no fewer than 104 different languages. Writing of the C.M.S. Mission at Onitsha, Northern Nigeria—for which the Bible Society last year published a complete Ibo Bible—Archdeacon Dennis describes the rule that all candidates shall learn to read the Scriptures in their own tongue before being accepted for baptism, unless they are excused on account of age or infirmity.





*Photo lent by the Director General*

**ON THE UPPER NILE.**  
Looking up stream at Kiro.

*Survey Department, Egyptian Government.*



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“We have been selling the Ibo New Testaments at 1s. 6d. apiece, which is the cost price. This represents two days’ wages for a labourer, or one week’s food allowance for boys. Yet the price is always most cheerfully paid, the buyer being generally as profuse in his thanks as if he had received the book as a present. Many who had not the money have gladly gone a distance of thirty or more miles to fetch a load of 60 lbs. weight, so as to earn a New Testament. Others have gathered large quantities of firewood to give in exchange for a book. Though the Testament is somewhat bulky, it is never omitted from the baggage when a journey has to be taken—although in that country every load has to be carried on the head, and the road is often rough and long, and the sun hot. And whenever there is a halt for rest or a few minutes to spare, out comes the New Testament for perusal.”

### **Pioneering for Pioneers.**

From a strategical standpoint the most interesting missionary advance last year was the C.M.S. pioneer expedition sent out in October, by invitation of Lord Cromer, into the Egyptian Sudan. The Mission has now established itself on the Nile—more than 1,000 miles south of Khartum, and about mid-way between that city and the capital of Uganda—in the midst of the Dinka country. It is not often remembered that as early as 1848 Jesuit missionaries had penetrated to Khartum, and a year later had planted a station at Gondokoro. Through intercourse with these Jesuits, an Austrian scholar became so keenly interested in the Dinka language that with their assistance he made a Dinka version of St. Luke’s Gospel, which was printed forty years ago as a philological essay. The Jesuit Mission became extinct. But this Dinka Gospel was quite recently revised by the Bible Society’s late Agent at

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Alexandria, aided by the solitary native Dinka in England, and was published by the Society in time to present copies to the C.M.S. Gordon Memorial Mission to the Sudan before it set out.

We learn with peculiar pleasure that the members of the expedition derive important assistance from this Dinka version of St. Luke. To quote from their letters written last May :—

“We have found the Dinka Gospel published by the Bible Society of considerable assistance to us in learning the language. It has naturally been our ground-work, and as such has been invaluable. . . . God has been opening His way before us, and we have been really heartily welcomed by the Dinkas. Already I think the natives begin to understand why we have come, and we are just beginning with very stammering lips to tell them the Old, Old Story. . . . We have found the version of very considerable help in our work, as, barring dialectical variations, I should think ninety per cent. of the words are understood here. . . . God has greatly blessed us in our efforts to come into sympathetic touch with the people, and, thanks to the Bible Society's version, we are getting our mouths open in Dinka, and telling the Gospel story.”

### **In Madagascar.**

In this great island, which is larger than France, Bible distribution is carried on by Committees, representing all the Protestant Missions—the L.M.S., the S.P.G., the Friends', the Norwegian, and the American Lutheran—which are at work there. During 1905 the Bible Society granted 17,400 copies of Malagasi Scriptures, whose cost amounted to £359. The books are sent out free, and carriage paid, to the Committees, who sell the copies at prices which they themselves

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fix, and remit to the Bible Society any proceeds from copies sold, after defraying expenses of circulation. For example, a Malagasi Bible of fair size and clear print can be purchased in the island for 1s., but its total cost to the Society is more than 2s. The Malagasi New Testament is sold at 4d., though it cannot cost the Society less than 8d. At best, only a fraction of what the Society expends on the preparation and delivery of these missionary versions can ever come back to it as the result of such sales.

### **Among the Votyaks.**

In the valley of the great river Volga, not far from the city of Kazan, dwells a semi-pagan tribe now being evangelized by the Russian Church. One of the Bible Society's colporteurs spent about a month last year travelling among these Votyaks, carrying to them the first edition of the Four Gospels in their own tongue published for them by the Bible Society. No gift could have been more timely and opportune. These folk, who can hardly understand the Russian language, are being brought out of heathenism, and it is necessary that they should drink from the pure spring of the Gospel. The colporteur spent a Sunday in one of their villages, where he attended church. The liturgy was said in Slavonic and Votyak, and then the Russian missionary priest delivered a long Votyak sermon, often opening the Gospels and quoting from them. The colporteur was able to sell some 200 Votyak books on this journey; and the circulation of the Four Gospels in Votyak during last year was 500 copies.

### **The Missionary Opportunity.**

Since modern missions began, there has been no

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moment more manifestly marked out by the hand of Providence for missionary extension than the present. For the first time, and in a fresh and new way, the ideas and civilization of Western Christendom are penetrating and permeating great countries and races which are not yet Christian. Great seams and rifts of disintegration appear, running through heathen systems and societies. Moreover, during this past year gigantic events have taken place in the Far East, which both in themselves and in their results must make the year supremely memorable. For the first time in modern history an Asiatic nation after a tremendous conflict has beaten down a European nation. It is too soon to forecast the ultimate effect of the Japanese triumph. One immediate consequence is to bring Japan into closer intercourse with Europe and especially with England.

### **Japan and Christianity.**

Never before, perhaps, since the days when the early Church came into contact with the civilizations of Greece and Rome, has Christianity been set the task of winning a gifted and cultivated heathen nation, already possessing world-wide influence. Never before, perhaps, has any nation shown such a natural aptitude for not a few Christian virtues. Japan to-day probably stands nearer to agnosticism than to any definite religious faith. Yet it was surely significant that in the hour of victory the Japanese treated their prisoners of war in accordance with Christian ideas, and deliberately chose Christian nurses for the wounded. We rejoice that among these remarkable people, nearly all of whom can read, the Scriptures are being bought and read far beyond all former precedent. The two British Bible Societies sold





SELLING FISH IN JAPAN.

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last year in Japan 204,000 books—double the sales in 1904—notwithstanding that they had given away 300,000 books to Japanese soldiers and sailors during the war.

### **The Outlook in India.**

One picturesque event of the year 1905-6, has been the royal progress through the Indian Empire made by the Prince and Princess of Wales, who were welcomed at every point of their journey with enthusiastic loyalty. After their return to England, the Prince himself, in the eloquent and graphic speech which he delivered in the Guildhall, emphasized one fundamental aspect of India which does not readily suggest itself to stay-at-home Englishmen—its immense and bewildering variety. India cannot be regarded as one country. It is a continent as large as Europe without Russia, and this great continent harbours countlessly varied types of race, language, religion, and custom. How are we to penetrate to the heart of it? The Prince, doubtless with the utmost truth, urged a wide use of sympathy. This quality, as the *Times* remarked, has never been lacking among the great Englishmen who have left the deepest impression upon India, and in the future it can hardly be less potent than in the past. And there is one simple, practical form of sympathy with India which the Bible Society continually exemplifies and exhibits. We may link the East and the West together in spiritual wedlock, by means of that sacred Book, written by Orientals, which has inspired the highest faith and moulded the noblest characters among Western mankind.

The total number of volumes distributed by the Bible Society in India (excluding Burma) has again, for the

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fifth year in succession, exceeded all former precedent, reaching 666,000 copies. Almost every Mission in India depends on this source for its supplies. The variety of versions and editions needed may be inferred from the current catalogue of Scriptures in Indian vernaculars issued by our Calcutta depôt, which contains 289 different headings, all diverse in language, or type, or binding. Half a million children are now attending Sunday Schools in India, where they are taught the Scriptures in sixty different languages, from versions all of which are provided by the Bible Society. Never were the spiritual opportunities so wide, the responsibilities so overwhelming. In the words of the late Sir William Hunter, a most competent observer, "The uprising of the Indian intellect, the awakening of Indian thought and aspirations, are such as the world has not seen since the Revival of Learning in Europe."

### **A National Missionary Society.**

On Christmas Day, 1905, there was held in the historic library of William Carey, at Serampore, a meeting which may mark the beginning of a new era in the evangelization of India. At the invitation of three honoured Indian Christians, delegates from all parts of the peninsula came together to form a "National Missionary Society of India." A hundred millions of people in India live practically outside the range of all existing missionary organizations, while of the total population hardly one per cent. can be classed as even nominally Christian. Obviously there is not only ample scope, but urgent need for direct evangelistic effort on the part of Indian Christians to reach their own fellow-countrymen. This new movement will be *conducted by Indian men,*



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*supported by Indian money, and controlled by Indian management, with an advisory board of experienced foreign missionaries. There is no thought of forming a fresh denomination. Christians of the same communion will, as far as possible, be sent to work together, in districts contiguous to those already occupied by the Church to which they belong. Difficulties are involved in carrying out this ideal; but every effort will be made to preserve the true spirit of Christian comity. The growth of the movement will be watched with eager interest and hope by all friends of Missions' and of India.*

### **The Renaissance in China.**

The year 1905 will stand out in Chinese records as the year of the Great Reforms. One result of the Japanese victories has appeared in the advent of new energy in the Government, and of new hope among the people of China. Like the coming of spring in their own northern provinces, the transformation has been rapid and complete. Obstructive and unprogressive officials have been quietly set aside; new ideas have been welcomed, and far-reaching reforms have been officially promoted. More amazing still, this policy of progress appears to be received with general enthusiasm.

Perhaps the most momentous reform thus inaugurated concerns education. For centuries past Official Examinations based on the Confucian Classics have been the only gateway to official position or social influence. The abolition of these Official Literary Examinations has liberated the Chinese nation from an intellectual bondage that made progress impossible; whilst the new educational policy of the Government is covering the provinces with

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colleges and schools, and carrying enlightenment into the remotest parts of the Empire. Temples are being turned into seminaries for the new learning and the temple revenues devoted to their maintenance. This one reform contains the promise of a radical change of thought and a steady national development. Other reforms—legislative, administrative, and social—follow naturally, as a matter of course.

### **The Missionary Prospect.**

The outlook from the missionary point of view is full of hope. If the new knowledge brings with it a spirit of independence and even a measure of anti-foreign feeling, it will, in due time, also awaken a new sense of responsibility in the ruling classes and release the common people from many of their degrading superstitions and ignorant fears. The problem which now confronts the missionary in China is how to make the best of his immense opportunities. An intellectual and national awakening has come. How can a spiritual awakening be brought about? The new knowledge needs the leaven of the Gospel, and the spirit of reform requires to be directed to the highest ends. How can this be accomplished?

### **The Demand for the Bible.**

For the Bible Societies, the problem is mainly one of means and methods. The Book, to whose translation and circulation their work is consecrated, is pre-eminently the Book for the times. The Word of God, with its revelation of the Way, the Truth, and the Life, is the Word above all others that China's awakening millions need. We rejoice that this first year of the Renaissance

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has called the British and Foreign Bible Society to print and issue over *one million three hundred thousand* volumes of the Scriptures in China, while more than a million volumes were actually sold. As the new learning wins its way and the people see more clearly the insufficiency of their own ethical and religious literature, we may confidently expect an increased desire to read the Bible, and a more intelligent interest in its Divine message.

The catalogue of Chinese Scriptures issued by our depôt at Shanghai contains 385 entries. It may be worth while to quote some of the prices at which popular editions are sold. In High Wenli, a Bible which has cost the Bible Society 2s. to produce is sold at 6d. ; a New Testament which cost 4d. is sold at 1¼d. ; single Gospels which cost 2d. are sold at ¼d. In Easy Wenli, a New Testament which cost 6d. is sold for 1½d. In Mandarin, a New Testament which cost 7d. is sold for 1½d.

### Missions in China.

Writing in the *Contemporary Review* for May, 1906, Dr. Timothy Richard estimates the total population of China at 400,000,000—of whom Confucians, Buddhists, and Taoists together make up 378,000,000, while there are also 20,000,000 Muhammadans and 2,000,000 Christians. Dr. Richard adds : “ There are now 2,000 Protestant and 900 Roman Catholic missionaries in China, counting women as well as men, but not including the wives of missionaries.”

The Centenary Missionary Conference, which will meet at Shanghai towards the end of April, 1907, promises to have exceptional importance, in view of the vast new problems and the fresh conditions and opportunities which are opening up before Christianity in China.

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For instance, reports will be presented from the committees engaged for years past in producing "Union" versions of the Scriptures in the three great forms of Chinese—High Wenli, Easy Wenli, and Mandarin; while the famous "Term" question will also be brought forward with a view to the adoption, if possible, of one set of Chinese equivalents for "God" and "Holy Spirit." At this Conference the Bible Society will be represented by the Rev. J. H. Ritson, one of its Secretaries.

### **Revival and the Scriptures.**

Most thankfully do we record that in some provinces of the mission field—as, for example, in Madagascar, in Korea, in India, and among the Khasia Hills in Assam—the kindling of spiritual revival has created a great new desire for the Scriptures, as was also the case in Wales. In Korea we were quite unable to supply some colporteurs with enough books to meet the demand. From Fianarantsoa, South Madagascar, the Rev. A. S. Hockett, of the L.M.S., writes :—

" May we not regard the marvellous awakening of spiritual life and the unprecedented number of new converts we have had during the past year as due in large measure to the constant and regular Bible teaching that has been given for years past in all our schools and churches? It is interesting to note that the majority of converts in this revival were former scholars, who had been instructed in the Word of God. An encouraging feature has also been the demand for Bibles. One missionary wrote, when our stock was exhausted: 'I am simply bewildered: What am I to do? Numbers of these new converts are coming to me day after day for Bibles, and I have not one to sell them—hungering for the Word of Life, and I am forced with shame to send them away hungry.' Happily that state of things does not exist now, as we have received a large fresh consignment."

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### At Jerusalem.

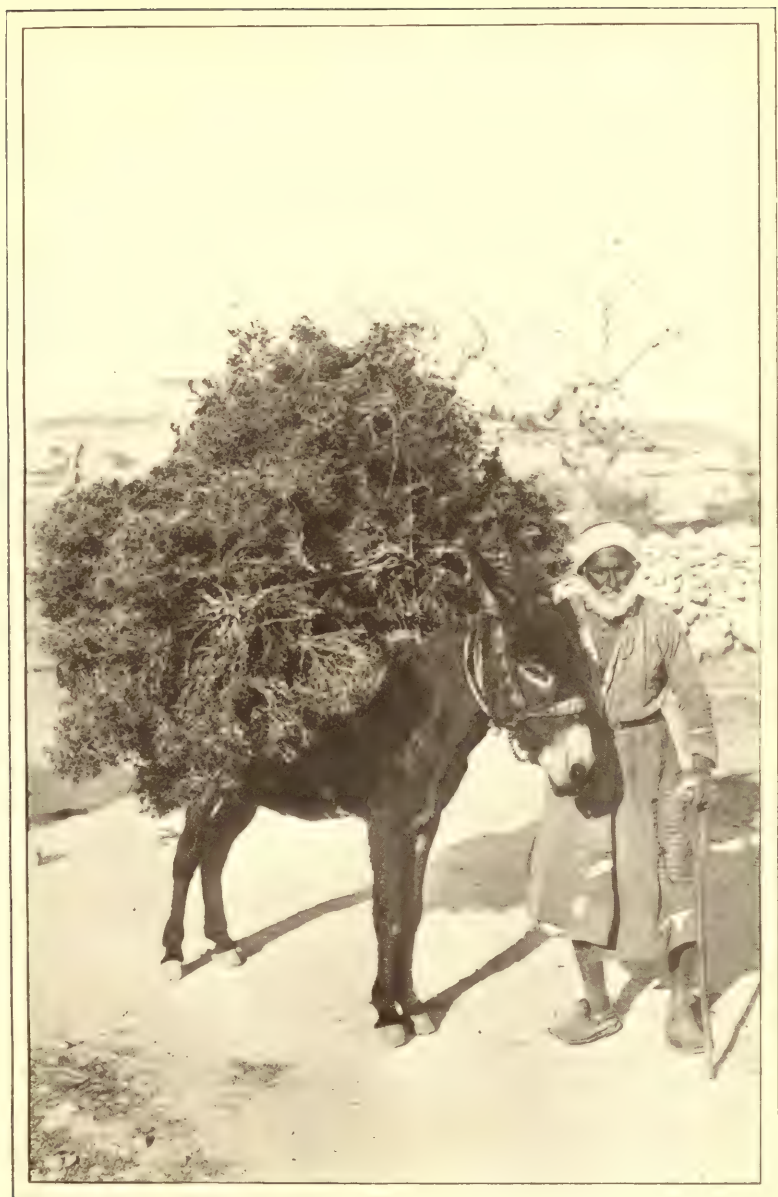
This section may fitly close by recording how the Bible Society opened last September a new depôt at Jerusalem for the supply of Scriptures in Palestine. The Holy City is still a focus for the Christian interest of Europe. The Abyssinian and Coptic Churches of Africa and the Christians of Western Asia look to it as their religious bourne. Jews reside here in tens of thousands, aliens in their own land, strangers in their own metropolis ; while Moslems hold Jerusalem as a shrine second only in importance to Mecca itself. Here of all places it cannot be doubted that the Scriptures—Hebrew and Christian—should be accessible to Jew and Greek of whatsoever sect or communion.

“The depôt stands in an excellent position near the Jaffa gate, a short distance outside the walls. On its shutters the Society’s name is painted in English, French, and German. Gospels in the languages most widely known at Jerusalem are placed in the windows so that they can be read by passers-by ; and it has frequently inspired us to prayer when men were heard reading aloud—perhaps for the first time—the story of the meeting of Christ and Nicodemus.

“In Jerusalem the Moslems are difficult to reach, owing to the intolerance of Turkish rule. If a Muhammadan were even to enter the depôt, he would do so at the risk of imprisonment. With the Jews and Christians, who form the large majority of the population, the case is different. The depôt is daily visited by Jews, and what little colportage could be done was most successful amongst that race. Most of the Protestant Missions resort to the depôt, and not a few priests, Roman, Greek, and Armenian, purchased Scriptures and seemed to appreciate the existence of the shop of the Holy Book.”

## THERE IS A RIVER

Last year in Jerusalem God's Word was sold in eighteen different languages and in five diglots, to the number of 1,811 volumes. The Churches of Christendom, East and West, drew Scriptures in Greek, Latin, French, Italian, Russian, Georgian, and Slavonic, while Syriac, Armenian, and Ethiopic stand for the demands of smaller ancient branches of the universal Church. Jewish and German colonies called for Scriptures in their respective languages. Thousands of pilgrims—Russian, Armenian, Abyssinian—crowd the Holy City from Christmastide through Easter and on to Pentecost. For fully seventy years the Bible Society has endeavoured to have these pilgrims in remembrance, and while they are surrounded with tawdry emblems, images, and pictures—the furniture of vain superstition—to place in their hands the Holy Scriptures, the living oracles of God. The Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem wrote last year: "Probably the most powerful missionary in the Bible Lands is the Bible Society."



*Photo by the*

*[American Colony, Jerusalem.]*

"TO-MORROW IT IS CAST INTO THE OVEN."





## THERE IS A RIVER

### THE ART OF IRRIGATION

*"The Bible must come to men, in order that men may come to the Bible."*—KLAUS HARMS.

EVERY river in the East becomes the parent of many artificial streams. By all kinds of contrivances, often by the crudest waterwheel, or the most primitive lever, the precious fluid is drawn up out of the river-bed and lifted over its enclosing banks, and made to flow along channels and conduits, and thence led away into countless little rills running to fertilize the fields and moisten the gardens which otherwise would lie parched and perishing under a cloudless sky. It is not enough that there should be a river: there must also be steady, skilful, watchful irrigation, to spread the water far and wide over the thirsty ground. Our own lot is cast in a land which the rain rarely forgets, a land which often indeed justifies the adjective applied by Carlyle to the fen country.<sup>1</sup> And so we scarcely understand how in vast regions like India and Egypt, the government has no practical problem more vital and imperious than the problem of irrigation—none that demands such lavish expenditure and such ceaseless care.

Now these things are an allegory: they prefigure and typify how the living water, which is the river of God's

<sup>1</sup> *"The country is all Fen . . . and still of a very dropsical character."*—Carlyle's *Cromwell*, Vol. I., Introduction, Chap. III.

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revelation and redemption, has been granted to man in order that it may be spread abroad wherever there are thirsty souls to drink it in. The special problem which the Bible Society exists to solve may be likened to this same problem of irrigation. For it requires that at least the printed Gospel shall be distributed throughout every country so that it may reach every man in his own tongue.

### **A Man Bearing a Pitcher of Water**

"Here is the man who carries God's Book," cried a child to her mother, in one of the towns of Peru. The Bible Society maintains 920 of these colporteurs, Christian men who can bear witness from their own experience to the Book which they carry along the highways and byways of the world. They go everywhere, offering draughts of living water, as cup-bearers of the great King. During this past year they have put into circulation over two and a quarter million copies of Holy Scripture.

### **The Native Born.**

The Bible Society employs, as far as possible in each country, native-born colporteurs, who are instinctively at home among the dialects and customs and ideas of their own people. All Missions are learning, by slow experience, that we must utilize the natural forces which lie in similarity of colour, of civilisation, and of thought. If we try to imagine African or Chinese Christians sent to diffuse the Gospel in the slums of Manchester or Glasgow, we begin to realize how grievously even the best and ablest foreign agents must needs be handicapped, just because they are foreigners. A Babi in Persia went to

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the root of the matter, when he said to a missionary from Europe : " You can never speak the language as we do ; you can never understand the thoughts of the people's hearts, the ideas which lie behind their words." Bishop Steere realized the same profound, inherent difficulty ; he longed passionately to enter into the minds of the Africans for whom he laboured, and when he saw little black boys talking in the streets of Zanzibar he used to say, " If only I knew all that those little boys know, I might hope to do something."

In selecting, training, and supervising each native colporteur, the object of the Bible Society is to utilize, not to suppress, his inbred originality ; to send him out not as a " whitewashed man," but as a native among natives—differing only from his fellows in that he grasps the simple, central Christian verities, and possesses a regenerated motive-power in the grace of God—carrying in his hand nothing except that Divine Word which can speak its own miraculous message to every human soul.

Here are two recent examples of service which no European could render. Last year in Japan a converted Buddhist priest was invited to give a course of lectures at the famous mountain monastery, Koya San. He is a good scholar and very well up in Buddhist literature. On his visit of a fortnight at the monastery he took with him 500 Bibles, Testaments, and Portions. The monks received their old member cordially, gave much attention to his lectures—and bought all his books. Again, at Tachienlu, on the extreme south-west of China, where the caravans start on their journey over the snowy passes into Thibet, an ex-lama has done successful colportage, selling Tibetan Gospels and Testa-

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ments among the traders and merchants who crowd the inns at this great frontier business centre.

Along such a direction, surely, lies the ultimate prospect of missionary triumph. The Church will only succeed on a great scale by means of Indian Christians, Chinese Christians, negro Christians, sent forth with the vernacular Gospel to evangelize their own fellow-countrymen.

### Seasoned with Salt.

It is refreshing to come across examples of the ready wit and native ingenuity with which our colporteurs can disarm an objector or win over an opponent.

At Dunkirk, Colporteur Vanhoucke, has a special gift of good-humour. "No, I don't want your books," said a woman, "I don't like reading." "*L'appétit vient en mangeant,*" replied Vanhoucke, good-humouredly. "True," said the woman laughing, and she bought a Testament. "I have no time to read," said a man to Colporteur Piriou, "I take a newspaper, but I cannot manage to read it, though it would be useful in my business." "Yes, but your newspaper contains both good news and bad news, while this book contains good news only." Colporteur Rouveirol at Tarbes was told, "Your books are Protestant." "Well," he replied, "they are Protestant books, inasmuch as they have been printed by Protestants. Suppose I were selling eggs, and you were told to throw them away because they had been laid by a Protestant's hen?"

### An Intelligent Donkey.

In Korea, the Rev. F. S. Miller, of the Presbyterian Mission, finds that Colporteur Yo is not tied by any hard-and-fast rules in introducing his books, but has various ways of persuading men to take his leaflets and buy his volumes.

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“On one trip when I accompanied Yo, he had a donkey named Skylark, which was given him by an American school-teacher. Skylark liked paper, so when a man refused one of Yo’s leaflets, Yo pulled a spoiled and crumpled one out of his pocket and handed it to Skylark, who ate it like a goat ; whereupon Yo, turning to the man, said : ‘See, the donkey has more sense than you ; he takes what is offered him.’ The chances were that the man would buy a book before he said to us, ‘Go in peace.’”

### **He Paid the Price.**

On the Blue Nile above Khartum, Colporteur Stephanos Marquar combines Arab shrewdness with Christian faith. “In the village of Souk-el-Aish (*i.e.*, the market of bread) I offered the *Tourat* (*i.e.*, the Pentateuch) to a sheikh, who, after reading for a long time, said, ‘I thank thee much for this book.’ I replied, ‘May God also reward thee for paying me its price.’ Thereupon he smiled, and paid me the money.” This colporteur knows how to give a reason for the hope that is in him. “At the end of March I arrived at Sennar, and there I offered the New Testament to a man who said, ‘I am a Jew.’ Then said I, ‘This book is for the Jew.’ Then said he, ‘If thou canst tell me where the Messiah is, I will take thy book.’ I answered, ‘Christ is in heaven and on earth, and is also found in my heart and in the heart of every one who confesses that He is the Saviour of the world.’ He was well pleased with my answer, and bought four copies of the New Testament, saying, ‘I love every one who without shame confesses the Messiah before men.’”

### **In Answer to Objectors.**

What can be more sensible and forcible than the way in which Colporteur Pinheiro replies to objectors in Portugal. People often say to him : “We don’t want either English Bibles or English religion. We have our fathers’ religion

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and want no new and false one. Those books are not true ; if they were, the priests would not say they were false. What you have there for sale is against all religion—so clear out of this place !” Pinheiro’s answer is somewhat as follows : “ Well, but I am Portuguese myself, and surely I have a right to be here in my own country. You don’t want English Bibles ; well, examine these, and you will see that they are translated by a Portuguese and printed in Portugal. You don’t want an English religion ; neither do I. What I want is simply the religion of Jesus Christ, pure and true, as we find it in the Bible, and not the doctrine of men. This book is neither new nor false. It is what Jesus Christ and His apostles taught. Bring me one of your Bibles and compare them, and see whether these books are not genuine.”

A village official in Bulgaria bade Colporteur Letshoff take his books away ; he did not need the Gospel, he knew what was good for himself. “ Listen to this,” said the colporteur, “ this is the Gospel for you ” ; and he read St. John xiii. 17 : *If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them.* Again, on one of his tours, Letshoff fell in with a party of students who assailed the colporteur with many arguments to prove that Scripture is not in harmony with the teachings of science. He had only one reply—that the Bible is not astronomy, nor geology, nor biology, nor zoology : it is God’s Book to guide mankind to God.

### The Brook by the Way.

From the reports of the colporteurs we gain frequent glimpses of a spirit and temper which are admirably Christian. According to one of the laws of Manu, the ancient Hindu legislator, every one drawing water is required to sing. That is like a parable of the gallant, cheerful mood in which these wayfaring Bible-men, often amid bitter hardships and obstacles, bring water out of the wells of salvation.

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From North China the Rev. J. Hedley, of the English Methodist New Connexion Mission, writes of the three Chinese colporteurs, whom he superintended last year :

### **A Cheerful Traveller.**

"I can speak of the earnestness and fidelity of the men employed as colporteurs for the Bible Society, who have sold 5,317 Portions of the Scriptures. I insist always upon the full price being paid for each copy. One of the three men, Ch'en Ho-ts'ai, has been the right hand of our preacher at Yenhoing, the market town into which we secured an entrance through his labours. He has made at least three trips outside the Great Wall, travelling each time from 80 to 140 miles. On the last occasion he sold no fewer than 600 Gospels in districts where hitherto a colporteur has been all too rarely seen. You could not wish for a more cheerful man on the road. The winds may blow their hardest ; the sun may blaze his fiercest ; you yourself may drag your weary body along and wish the night with its rest had come. Mr. Ch'en trudges on quite brightly, and in the evening will spend most of his time preaching the Gospel in his simple effective way to other travellers sharing the general *k'ang* with him."

### **"We Stand in the Breach."**

In truth, our colporteurs embody the brave saying of William Tindal : "My body is weary, but my spirit is not faint." One man closes a monthly report with these lines, written rapidly, in a sort of broken style : "People do not know about our daily struggle. Were it known, the world would thank God for His messengers and Christians would pray for us. We stand in the breach, and have to sustain the fire every minute. Would you know what the power of the Spirit means ? Ask those who depend on Him day after day." The young Frenchman who wrote those words had to spend a month last

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year on military service with his regiment. During that month he succeeded in selling thirty-two books, either to his fellow-soldiers in barracks, or at the houses near which they halted when on the march. "While my chums went off to quench their thirst, I slaked the thirst of the few I could visit with the Word of God."

### **The Salary of a Colporteur.**

Colporteur Rohrsetzer in the Argentine is a man of no common force and courage. He met a wool-merchant, who asked whether he would not give up selling Bibles and enter his service. "No, sir; I have already a Master who pays me more than all you possess." "How much does He give you?" "Ah, sir, He gives me a very big salary, to which millions can't be compared." "What do you earn, pray?" "Eternal life and happiness with Christ Jesus." "And how do you know that?" "I know it from God's Word." "But do you believe everything the Bible says?" "Certainly I do; I believe it with all my heart, just as if I had seen it with my eyes." "If you believe like that, happy are you." "Oh yes, sir, I am happy, and this is why I can speak to you of happiness. I have God's peace, the greatest treasure in the world." Whereupon the wool-merchant bought a Bible.

### **A Ubiquitous Mission.**

Colportage has been compared to the veins through which blood is carried to all parts and organs of the human body. No agency is more characteristic of the Bible Society and its ubiquitous mission. With their cheap little Testaments and Gospels, the colporteurs penetrate the most unlikely places and reach the most







*Photo by*

HOW THE SOCIETY'S SUBAGENT, MR. ELDRIDGE, TRAVELS IN THE MALAY STATES.

*Neville Edwards.*

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remote people—often unvisited by any other Christian messenger. We find them, for instance, busy in the docks of Marseilles, in the bazaars at Bagdad, in the railway station at Peking. We trace their steps through the apple-orchards in Tasmania, and among coolies in the Transvaal mines. Here, they are thrust out of a fanatical village in Morocco ; here they climb a snowy pass in the Andes to reach some mining camp, from which the Indians drive their llamas laden with silver ore.

### **In Central Europe.**

In Central Europe alone the Society has over seventy of these Bible-messengers. They send good news from islands in the Northern Sea, from vine-dressers on the Rhine, from hillsmen in Bavaria, and shepherds high on Alpine meadows. They tell us of work among the boatmen of the inland waterways, among the coal and iron men in Westphalia and Silesia, among the wood-hewers in the Black Forest. We hear of awakening hearts among the olive-growers on the Dalmatian coast and among fisher-folk in the sunny islands of the Adriatic. Swart Serbs among their oak forests praise the Lord for the gift of the Scriptures, so do bright-eyed Hungarians on their *pushtas*, and Poles in Galicia, and Ruthenes in the remote Bukovina. Slovaks, Rumans, Croats, Czechs, and how many others—they are all reading in their own tongues of the wonderful works of God.

### **On the Blue Danube.**

Two colporteurs share the Bulgarian field north of the Balkans. Both men live on the Danube ; and they traverse the wide plains and mountain-slopes and valleys

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from the frontiers of Servia to the Black Sea. If we take a month at random from a colporteur's journals we find a list of seven towns and twenty-eight villages visited during that period, with sales amounting to 194 copies of the Scriptures. Another colporteur spends a month in a town on the Danube, and sells 127 copies. Again we have a journal recording a day's journey with no sales; five villages visited by the way, and three books sold; nine villages passed through, where no sales could be made. One copy left by the way repays a day of toil.

The peasants are often quite uneducated, but they have the childlike reverence of unlettered folk for God's Book. "Many of the villagers could not read," writes Colporteur Athanasoff, "but they asked me if I had the same Book out of which their priest read in the church. 'What did he read to you?' I asked. 'About the Vine and the fruit,' they said. Whereupon I read to them St. John xv. They were delighted, and many of them bought Testaments to take to their homes."

### **In the Heart of Albania.**

Mr. George Kyrias, our depositary at Monastir, made a tour, under exceptionally favourable circumstances, into the centre of Albania. He may be said to have reached the heart of his country in a more intimate sense than the physical. In the important town of Elbasan, he says there is not a single house, either Christian or Moslem, which does not possess one copy at least of our Albanian Scriptures. The Beys of Elbasan—the Albanian chiefs—whom he met by invitation, requested him to urge the Society to print more Albanian Scriptures. They were left, they said, being Moslems, in the darkness of ignorance. A Sunday was spent with the hospitable

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chief of an Albanian village. Mr. Kyrias proposed to read the Bible to these Moslems, when his host produced a Book of Psalms and invited him to read out of that. Later in the day, people from the neighbouring villages were called to come and listen. The host provided supper, and Mr. Kyrias was detained far into the night, speaking to this assembly of Albanian peasants. On the following day the villagers escorted him two hours' distance on his road, and made him promise that books should be sent to them. Mr. Kyrias found everywhere the fruits of the labours of our two Albanian colporteurs, Sinas and Luka, and an immense regard and reverence in the hearts of the people for the Bible Society.

### **Nunc Dimittis.**

An old man brought his little store of money to purchase an Albanian Testament. "Now I am ready to die," were his words, "because in these books I have found salvation for my soul." With such a *Nunc Dimittis* many an old Albanian has blessed the colporteur. A priest of the Eastern Church, who had bought an Albanian Testament, said to Sinas, "Alas for the people to whom I have been appointed to show the way of the Lord! Now that I have the Word in my own tongue, I understand what a heavy charge has been laid upon me." And this priest has now begun earnestly to read and preach to his people "the way of the Lord."

### **On the Roman Campagna.**

Colporteur Zito met a shepherd on the Roman Campagna leading about a hundred sheep. "My good man,

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your sheep follow you, because they know you are guiding them to where they can find pasture. Let me read you from this Book some beautiful words about another Good Shepherd, who, with infinite love, leads His sheep to green pastures, which give everlasting life." And as they walked along together he read the tenth chapter of St. John, and the shepherd was so delighted with it that he bought a New Testament. Zito does very good work among these lonely shepherds of the deserted Campagna, reading and expounding the Scriptures in their huts till late into the night. And next morning he offers prayer with them, before he goes on his way. Zito writes :

"I find that the reading of the Word has more effect than all our talking, and, wherever I go, I ask the people to read the Bible. . . . I prefer the work of colportage to any other, although my experience varies a great deal. Like the Roman weather in January, it may be sun in the morning, heavy rain in the afternoon, and bright sky again towards evening."

### On the Shores of the White Sea.

Colporteur E. Maslennikoff, gives the following report of his last long summer tour in the far north of Russia :

As usual, I began in the town of Vologda, but here I had less than the usual success, as I arrived after the breaking up of the schools for the summer ; in these schools it is a common practice to give portions of the Scriptures as prizes to pupils who pass with distinction into the next class. From Vologda I went by train to Archangel, and thence by steamer round the coast of the White Sea to the towns of Onega, Suma, Soroka, and lastly to the island of Solovetski and its favourite monastery. The Superior, the Archimandrite

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Joanniki, bought about 300 copies of the Scriptures, which he will distribute among the poorest of the pilgrims to this shrine. The monastery both sells and distributes *gratis* books containing its own history and the lives of its holy men, Zosima and Savvati. Returning to Archangel, I went up the river Vycheгда, taking advantage of the small local steamers, to the Ziryen district, calling at half-a-dozen villages. In all of them, reporting myself first to the clergy, I received a warm welcome, and was able to effect large sales. In one village, which is a military station, the commanding officer admitted me to the barracks, and took the kindest interest in my success; he himself bought 200 copies, which he will distribute among his recruits which come in the autumn.

### Colportage by River.

“For my boat excursion this year, I chose the river Pinega, the most northerly tributary of the northern Dvina. I made my way by horse to the village of Verkoly, far up the river; and here I had to procure a boat and a boatman with which to come down the river, following all its windings and calling at every inhabited place on its banks. The boat was exceptionally difficult to purchase; nobody had one to spare, and the boat which I ultimately bought at the price of 8 *roubles* (*i.e.*, 16s.) was a very sorry tub, old and worn out. ‘Kill me if you like,’ said an onlooker, ‘but don’t make me go in that boat.’ But what could one do, when nobody was willing to sell a better craft? After effecting such repairs as were possible, we set off, and in due time arrived safely at Archangel, having had the finest of weather all the way. On this river journey twenty villages were visited, over 1,000 copies of the Scriptures were sold, and the time taken was a couple of weeks.”

### In Manchuria after the War.

During the last few weeks of 1905 a Japanese colporteur, who had been busy among his fellow countrymen in

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Korea, took steamer from Seoul for Manchuria, where, amid frost and snow, he carried the Scriptures to the Japanese army of occupation. His journal gives us grim hints of the havoc wrought by war.

“At Tairen the temperature was 7° below zero. The trains were filled with returning soldiers. Everywhere was desolation; farms burned and buildings destroyed. Here I had to wait for the cases of books sent from Japan, as the steamer had gone on the rocks off the Korean coast. Two Christian army officers showed me great kindness, and I addressed 1,500 men on ‘The mighty power of the Bible.’ From Tairen I went to Liu Shiu Tan, where I found 300 cavalrymen loading their horses and wagons to return to Japan. In two days I sold 37 Testaments and some Gospels. Returning to Tairen, I was invited by the Commander of the Army Stores to a supper with his officers. As the Commander and three of these officers were Christians, I was encouraged to speak of our work. They expressed great surprise and pleasure upon hearing what the Bible Societies had done for the men in the Japanese army and navy.”

### **The Ruins of Port Arthur.**

“At Port Arthur, on account of the intense cold, there were only some 500 or 600 civilians and about 1,000 soldiers remaining. The Russian church is now used by the Y.M.C.A. By the help of God I sold 40 Testaments. On Sunday I addressed some 200 soldiers, and was given permission by one of the officers to visit the ruined batteries. Who can describe a desolate battlefield? The rough graves contain the bodies of Japanese and Russians, brave dead men. I climbed to the top of a ruin and knelt and thanked God with all my heart for stopping the war.

### **On the Andes of Peru.**

Perhaps no countries need the New Testament more than the Republics of South America. To obtain some







Photo by:

MARKET DAY AT GUARANDA, ECUADOR.

J. Neville Edwards.

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idea of how God's Book is carried to these remote regions we may follow in the track of a colporteur last year along the Oroya road, the steepest and highest railway in the world. Leaving Lima and the Rimac valley, with its cotton fields and sugar plantations, Colporteur Herrera ascended, station by station, this wonderful line which climbs the steep slopes of the Andes. Now and again he would make an excursion among the mountains to a silver-mining camp, or to an Indian village with its hovels and llamas. Now he is at Chosica, famous for its good milk; anon he is off to San Bartolomé and to Cocachacra, with its fine peaches and *paltas*, there to be welcomed by some of the native Christians, who are always ready to purchase a few copies of the Scriptures and show hospitality. The up-journey continues across the famous Verrugas railway bridge to Matucana, 8,000 feet above the sea. Again the colporteur is in San Matío, with its patches of wheat and barley on the mountain slopes, or at Casapalca with its silver-smelters. Past Morococha with its mines, and through the Galera tunnel with its glaciers, he reaches Oroya, the busy centre where the *arrieros* with their llamas and pack-mules unload their precious cargoes of silver ore, and carry back European merchandise to the towns on this elevated mountain plateau.

### Searching for a Bible.

At Casapalca, 13,606 feet above the sea—as high as the Jungfrau—Herrera visited the silver-smelters and other residents, among whom his sales were exceptionally good. Here is one letter to prove that his visit was not without blessing. “I had long searched to procure a Bible,” wrote Señor X. “In my boyhood my father told

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me about it, and urged me if possible to obtain a copy. Once on a visit to Lima I searched among all the leading booksellers for a Bible, but could not find one." Señor X. is now himself an earnest student of the Bible, and, better still, is making steady progress in circulating the Scriptures in his own township.

### **Eldorado in the Snow.**

Cerro Pasco, the famous mining-centre, which for centuries has been known as a rich silver-producing mountain, is now declared to possess also the greatest single deposit of copper. It is difficult to realize that this town actually stands 15,000 feet above the sea—at an altitude only 600 feet less than the summit of Mont Blanc. At such an elevation few people can bear the rarefied atmosphere, and until one grows perfectly acclimatized, the slightest exertion causes fatigue and exhaustion. The colporteur can only sell his books by incessantly emphasizing with his voice the message that the Book contains; and so for some time after his arrival at Cerro Pasco he had to suffer from severe inflammation of the glands of the throat. Here, all the seasons of the year may be experienced in twenty-four hours. In the morning a blinding snow storm may cover the city with a mantle of white; the forenoon may be warm and spring-like; the afternoon gusty and raw, like March, and the evening mild and pleasant. The nights and early mornings are piercingly cold.

Like most mining centres, Cerro is a godless city, and outside the Roman Church the only Christian ministrations were those of our colporteur as he carried his books from door to door. As the result of his patient and tactful efforts, Señor Herrera must be congratulated on

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having distributed over 1,000 copies of the Scriptures in Cerro. This brings up his sales for last year to nearly 3,900 volumes—a splendid total in a country like Peru.

### **On the Plains of Mongolia.**

Across these enormous wind-swept plains our Sub-agent, Mr. Larson, makes his way with a caravan of camels and ponies, and sells the Scriptures in the crowded, smoke-filled Mongolian tents. A born traveller, his letter shows that even his remarkable powers of endurance have been sorely tried.

“In my three different journeys during 1905 I covered about 2,830 English miles, and spent 228 days in Mongolia and along its borders. On my first tour in winter, I went due west along the border of China and Mongolia, and sold 500 Chinese Gospels to farmers and scholars in the many scattered villages. The weather was bad and the cold intense. I am still quite deaf in one ear from a cold taken on that trip. At the Chinese New Year (January 26th) I took another short trip in Mongolia, north of Kalgan. For fifteen days a blizzard was blowing, and the air was thick with snow and sand. My Mongol camel-men’s faces were frost-bitten badly, and my nose and one ear were touched. I could sell only 33 books, and I came back quite tired.

### **Rival Buddhas.**

“My summer work on the plains began April 27th and ended October 12th. During that time, I went again as far north as Urga. The people there were all too busy with the Dalai Lama of Tibet—who had taken refuge at Urga from Lhasa—to inquire into anything else. Still I sold some Scriptures, both Tibetan and Mongolian, to pilgrims who gather there from all parts of the country. The Dalai Lama was living in the west temple, and Bogda—the incarnation of Buddha residing at Urga, or the Urga Lama—in the

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central temple. Though hierarchs of the same religion and living within a couple of miles of each other, they were not on friendly terms, and met but once during the year that the Dalai spent in Urga. Even the yearly festivities were cancelled because of this disagreement. I noticed, though, that the northern Mongols took very decidedly the part of their own Buddha—Bogda.

### Eaten by Wolves.

“Before we reached Urga, my helper was robbed of his horse, saddle, and everything ; and the horse that I bought to replace the stolen steed was eaten by wolves half-way between Urga and Kalgan. Then one Sunday, when we were in camp three days out of Urga, a severe earthquake occurred, when it was difficult to stand up ; we heard afterwards that great rents had been made in the ground.

### On the Blue Nile.

The cry of the boatmen on the Upper Nile—*Ele-aza*, although they have forgotten its real meaning (*Eloi-Jesa*, *i.e.*, Lord Jesus)—bears moving testimony to the ancient Christianity of the Sudan, as far as Khartum and beyond, for a thousand years. Our colporteur already referred to, who has carried the Scriptures along the course of the Blue Nile, finds friendly help in some unexpected quarters :

“I entered into a village where dwells a sheikh named Omar, who received me graciously. Then I presented to him a Bible, with which he was so well pleased that he called all the villagers together and began to sell the Scriptures for me, saying, ‘Here is the *Injil* (*i.e.*, Gospel) of our Lord Jesus.’ By means of this man I sold 20 Gospels, three copies of Genesis, and a Bible. At the village of Derr Abu Bekr I met a sheikh, who was intelligent and generous, and

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had a little knowledge of the Scriptures. To him I offered a copy of the *Tourat* (i.e., Pentateuch). When he had read a little therein, he asked the price. 'Its price is but seven *piastres*,' said I. 'Is that the cost of the leather binding only?' asked he. 'It may well be true that the leather cost more, nevertheless, the price of the whole book is as I said.' When he heard this he was glad, and tendered his hearty thanks to the Bible Society. Then he purchased ten Portions, and gave them to his servants."

### The Sultan, or the Bible Society.

"In the town of Hamlet Zein I also offered the *Tourat* to an old sheikh. 'What is its price?' inquired he. 'Its price is but seven *piastres*.' 'I am sorry for thee, that thou shouldst offer the book at so low a price,' said he. Then I told him I was a servant of the Bible Society, which spreads abroad the Holy Book amongst all people, that they may come to know God. Then said he, 'Such good work should be done by the Sultan.' Also he asked, 'Where is the chief place of this Society?' 'It is in London,' I replied. 'Is it, then, an English Society?' he asked. 'Yes, verily yes,' said I. 'Of a truth the English know God,' said he. Then he paid the price of a Bible for himself, and of six single Gospels, saying: 'I have a desire to imitate the Society in doing good by distributing these books among the people.'"

### From House to House in Osaka.

In the spring of 1906 five of our colporteurs decided to canvass the city of Osaka systematically, house by house. As Osaka—the Liverpool and Birmingham of Japan—contains no fewer than a million inhabitants, this undertaking was no child's play. On March 6th, after holding a prayer meeting, they set out from the depôt. A hand-cart was filled with copies of the Scriptures, and one colporteur pulled it while the others carried books in

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their hands. At each street corner they halted and sang a hymn ; then, when a small crowd gathered, they briefly explained what the Bible is, and invited the people to purchase. Down both sides of the street every house was visited, and the inmates were asked to buy a copy. Earnest efforts were made to sell at least a single Gospel in each home, and to speak a few well-chosen words on the Christian faith. So thorough a method of working involved considerable time and energy, but proved in many cases highly successful. At night the men returned to their headquarters, and united in prayer and thanksgiving to God. On wet days special visits were made to schools, banks, and hospitals in the city.

The colporteurs persevered, in spite of discouragements and opposition. Often they were treated as beggars soliciting alms, and many shop-keepers received them rudely ; but by tact and patience and courtesy they generally conciliated their opponents. Where Christianity seemed disliked among many of the lower classes, this was invariably found to be due to sheer and simple ignorance. After a little explanation the people showed themselves quite reasonable, and often consented to buy Gospels. During the first month of this energetic attempt 4,126 copies of the Scriptures were sold. Considerable interest was awakened in Christian homes and among the Christian congregations at Osaka, from some of whom came offers of assistance. More significant still, one of the leading Japanese daily papers, the *Osaka Mainichi Shimbun*, published the following comment :—

“The British Bible Societies have taken time by the forelock in embarking upon a great Bible-selling campaign on an extended scale in this city. Their plan is to circulate, if possible, 100,000 copies of the Scriptures. A large supply



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of books has been provided, and the Societies' colporteurs have made a start with the work. Thus far the venture has proved so successful that the large number of 3,089 books have been distributed. The district in which the work has been commenced is Senba, a most conservative section of the city. When the other districts of the city are visited even greater success may be looked for. We consider the movement a unique and interesting one."

### **Consecrated Drudgery.**

This business of colportage, more than almost any other, demands faithful, patient persistence in well-doing. Early last year our Sub-agent, Mr. Copp, completed a house-to-house canvass of Yentai, the Chinese city at the port of Chefoo. He writes :—

"From Dec. 30th to April 29th we tramped the straight and crooked roads called in Chefoo 'streets,' asking a thousand times, 'Do you want a Gospel or calendar?' and being set on by a thousand dogs (happily not all at once), being refused hundreds of times, but also having a good reception and a good hearing now and again. . . . Practically every shop, house, and cabin has been visited. Chefoo is a large place, and takes a very long time to go over as we work it. It has been splendid work, and the sales have been as good as ever."

### **In Burma.**

In reckoning up those factors which go to make, or to mar, "the soul of a people," we realize that in a country like Burma, God's Book can be brought into the hands of men most effectively by means of colportage. We are therefore especially thankful for the great success which has attended this work among the Burmese. Twelve native colporteurs, maintained throughout last year, have travelled 10,000 miles, visited 3,000 different villages, and

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sold 35,000 books—an average of nearly 3,000 books apiece—while 4,000 books have been sold by the Agent and his assistant colporteur on tour. It must be remembered also that nearly every Burmese lad learns to read at the free school attached to the monastery of his native village.

### **In Siberia.**

Now turn for a moment from the south to the north of Asia, and look at colportage last year in Siberia, where the sales exceeded all earlier records. Here our ten Bible-sellers travelled between them 30,000 miles. Railroads and steamboats conveyed men and books free with splendid generosity, even during the stress of the war. Russian soldiers homeward-bound from the front would spend their last coins on a Testament; one soldier offered to pledge his boots, and another to pledge his last shirt, others to borrow money from their comrades for this purpose. Among the sick and wounded troops many thousands of Gospels were given away and accepted with pathetic gratitude.

### **Lodging in Mosques.**

From Mosul, opposite the site of ancient Nineveh, Colporteur Mansur Jebury writes :

“ In certain villages I could find no inn available, and I was, therefore, obliged to lodge at the Muhammadan mosque. This was permitted without any hindrance, and at the end of each meeting for prayer a large crowd of Moslems gathered around me. Certain of them purchased books, and some asked me to read the Bible to them. To this some were attentive, and others argued on religious points, while others desired me to explain a few passages in the Holy Book.”





ON THE PANAMA CANAL.

Photo copyright. Underwood and Underwood, London

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### Among Devil-worshippers.

The following picture is from Ceylon :

“We have sold a fair number of Scriptures among the Saivites and Muhammadans, who read them with some delight. Certain Tamil devil-worshippers opposed us. A very respectable and religious Saivite who wears the *lingam* and sacred beads, listened to me as I read a few verses in an assembly, and at once bought three different Portions for his children.”

But space fails us to depict the routes and fortunes of those “men who carry God’s Book” up and down the world. In the Russian Empire, they sold last year 212,000 copies ; in India, nearly a quarter of a million copies ; in China the colportage sales amounted to no fewer than 940,000 books. You may meet them in the restaurants of Paris, on the quays of Constantinople, visiting the lumber-camps of Ontario and New Brunswick, traveling by bullock cart in the Malay Peninsula, tramping beside the trench of the Panama Canal. Wherever men and women congregate in crowds, at markets or fairs or festivals, our Bible-sellers take advantage of the opportunity. Two Italian colporteurs have been stationed at the entrances of the Exhibition at Milan this summer. Last year, on the day of the chief Buddhist festival, two English lady missionaries and their native pupils sold 400 Gospels, at a farthing apiece in the precincts of the great pagodas at Mandalay.

### At Railway Stations.

These foci of traffic and travel present peculiar facilities for colportage, which our agents are quick to seize. Colporteur Konopleff meets all the trains at the railway

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station on the banks of the great river Obi, which is the natural terminus of the western section of the trans-Siberian line :—

“In a passenger train I came across a party of workmen returning from the gold mines. One of them said, ‘We have been away in the wilderness, far from church or priest, for three years without even seeing a copy of this Book which you are now showing us. We have been forgetting God ; we have used all kinds of foul and evil language ; yea, we are great sinners.’ This open confession seemed to move his mates, who bought a large number of copies. Several of them could not read, but they said, ‘We will try to be better men. We shall find some one at home who will read the book for us.’

The iron road has begun in earnest to open up the provinces and cities of China. It sounds strange to hear that Colporteur Yao, who was one of those who carried a message from the besieged legations to Tientsin in 1900, has somehow ingratiated himself with the authorities, so that they allow him to sell books at the Peking railway station. He goes in and out amongst the crowds who fill the trains going to Tientsin and for the most part have a little spare money with them, and in this way he has actually sold as many as 1,500 and 1,600 books in a month.

Colporteur Antonio Selle spent nearly the whole of last year at the great city of Rosario, where he, and he alone, is allowed to sell the Bible in the railway stations. He holds, moreover, a free pass to travel by train as often as he likes. During the year he has visited six, seven, and even eight trains daily and offered God’s Word to certainly over four hundred passengers each day. His total sales exceeded 7,000 books.



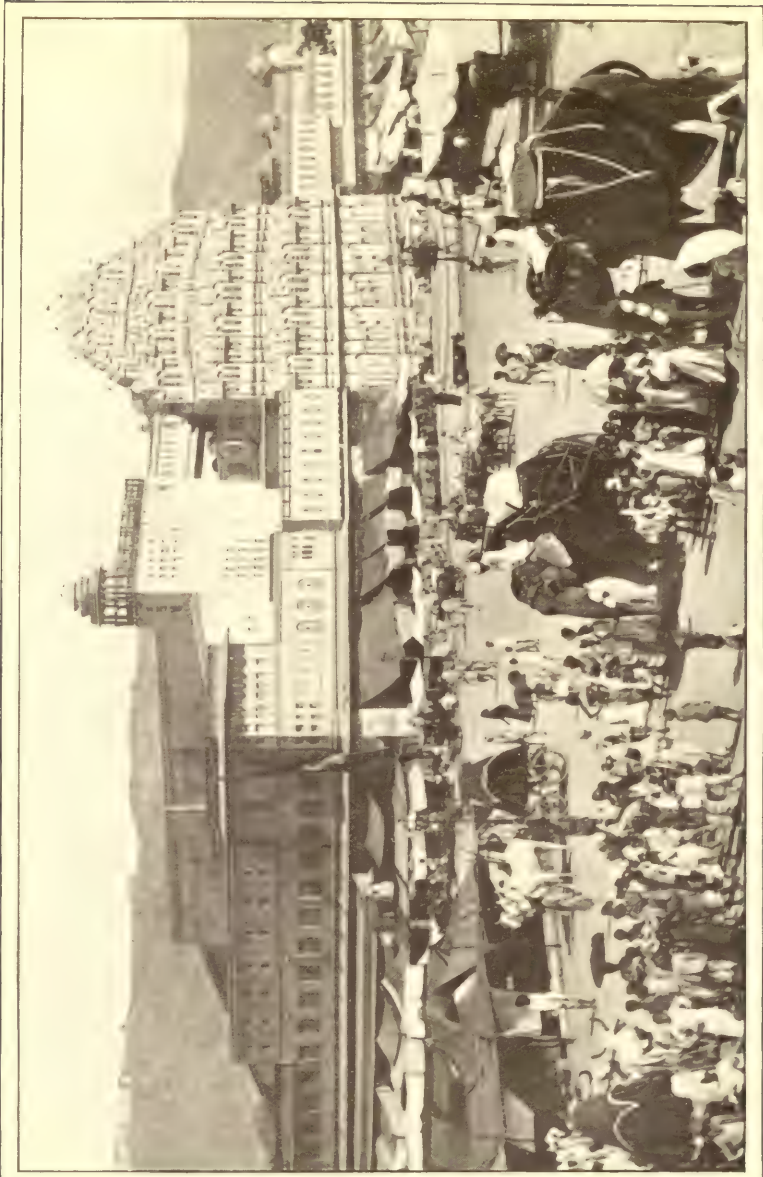


Photo by]

A STREET IN JEYPORE

[Johnson and Hoffman.



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### **The Colporteur as Evangelist.**

In Christian countries it is no part of a colporteur's business to preach. He merely commends the Bible by the witness of his own experience, as the Book in which God speaks to men. But among non-Christian peoples he must obviously give some simple explanation of the volume which he offers, before he can hope to sell it to strangers, even at a nominal price. From the nature of the case, and with the hearty sanction of the missionaries, the Bible Society's colporteurs in heathen lands must be more than mere book-sellers; the same Gospel of redeeming love, which they carry in print, glows in their hearts and kindles in their common speech. From all quarters of the mission field we hear of native colporteurs who also do the work of an evangelist, often with signal success and with the manifest seal of God's blessing. A few instances of this form of service may close the present chapter.

### **In North India.**

From Allahabad we learn that the special importance and value of colportage as an evangelizing agency are coming to be more generally recognized among the aggressive Missions. The man with the Book is pushed forward as a pioneer. Inquirers are brought in by the colporteurs and Biblewomen for instruction and baptism.

"Our two colporteurs are busy scattering the Word. I was out with them for three weeks in March. During that time we preached in twelve bazaars and over thirty villages, and sold 856 books. I was much encouraged at the progress the colporteurs themselves are making, not only in selling Scriptures, but in telling the story of the Cross. Neither of these colporteurs could read four years ago. It is wonderful what the Lord does for these jungle-people."

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### An Apostolic Convert.

From Hong Kong, the Rev. D. Endemann writes :—

“ In former years Colporteur Kyang-min traded in things necessary for idol-worship, women being his best customers. He himself was a most devout idol-worshipper, hoping in vain to find rest for his restless heart. At last he met at Canton one of my teachers, who became the means of leading him to Christ. After a year he was baptized, and from that time his one desire has been to help in the salvation of his heathen brethren. In due course he became a colporteur, and his heart and soul are in the work. He goes with me when I am itinerating, and he never gets tired of offering his books and of telling of Him whose love and mercy saved him. *During last year alone he led between fifty and sixty of his heathen fellow-countrymen into the light of the Gospel.*”

### In Korea.

The “ Hermit Kingdom ” has been rudely shaken out of its age-long torpor. With the upsetting of hoary superstitions and the advent of political reforms, the Koreans are beginning to turn, in unwonted and unexpected fashion, to the things of the Kingdom of God. Our Korean colporteurs sold 69,000 books—more than double their total in 1904. And never before in any single year have we received so many testimonies to the spiritual value of the colporteur as an evangelistic agent.

The Rev. W. R. Foote, of the Canadian Presbyterian Mission, Wonsan, says of one of his colporteurs : “ When he entered the employ of the Bible Societies, there were only five Christians in the field—a field in which he continues to be the only colporteur, while there are now 250 Christians and two churches.” And of another colporteur he writes : “ Last year there were

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only 20 Christians in his territory, and this year there are 100, who are cared for and fostered by the colporteur."

From South Korea, the Rev. R. H. Sidebotham, of the Presbyterian Mission, Fusan, writes:—

"Mr. Chang, our colporteur, was at the market in Chogei city, when a man came forward and bought two Gospels, and entered into conversation. Ten months before, he had bought two Gospels, and, after reading them, he became convinced that they were a good message to him. He believed in secret. Twice afterwards, when the colporteur came to Chogei, he had bought more books, but this time he wanted to get the whole story correctly. So he said, 'Please come to my house to-night, and bring your friend'—for Mr. Yi was helping Mr. Chang as an honorary assistant. On going to his house that night, they were surprised to find that the man knew a good deal of the Scripture story. On the wall hung some curious papers. 'What are those?' they asked. 'Those are prayers. The Gospel said I must pray, and I supposed that was the way to pray. Do not the people who do this doctrine pray by those papers on the wall?' Then they taught him the real inwardness of prayer from the heart. They also urged him to let his light shine, for as yet he was only a secret believer. After some persuasion, he went out and brought in some friends, who also listened gladly. For ten days Mr. Chang and Mr. Yi preached in that house, and they left five men definitely decided for Christ."

At tidings like these the heart of a Christian leaps up, as when he beholds a rainbow in the sky. Who can refuse to echo the sentence with which another missionary closes his letter: "God bless the colporteur, and the people who enable us to keep him at work by their unstinted contributions."

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### IN DRY AND THIRSTY LANDS

ONE characteristic quality of water is its power to percolate through obstacles and to diffuse itself almost imperceptibly, in spite of elaborate precautions against its inflow. And in the same way the Bible can pass through doors which are barred against every other Christian influence. This Book crosses the frontiers of kingdoms which no missionary may enter, and silently proclaims the Gospel where no preacher's voice is ever heard.

#### **Closed Countries.**

A glance at the missionary map of the world shows that not a few countries still remain closed, or only very partially open, to the missionary. Afghanistan, for example, admits no Christian teachers : nevertheless, the Pashtu Bible finds its way over the mountain wall north-west of the Panjab and reaches readers at Kandahar and Kabul. Similarly New Testaments and Gospels in Naipali are taken by native Christians across the frontier where for seven hundred miles Nepal marches with British India ; while the same books are distributed among the gallant little Gurkhas, who furnish some of the bravest regiments in our Indian army. From mission stations at Aden on the Red Sea and at Bahrain on the Persian Gulf, the Scriptures are carried by

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caravans of camels into the forbidden recesses of Arabia. From the inaccessible hinterlands of the West Coast of Africa, traders come down to Bonny or Accra, and bear home with them Hausa Gospels and Arabic Testaments. The Egyptian Government still prohibits aggressive mission work among the Moslem population in the Eastern Sudan; but the Bible Society's servants are permitted to sell the Scriptures without hindrance in any part of that vast territory.

### On the Borders of Tibet

Take the case of another country which remains sullenly closed against foreigners. The recent British expedition and the treaty which ensued have certainly opened no road for ordinary travellers into Tibet—probably they were never intended to do so. Nevertheless the Scriptures filter through barriers which baffle the tourist. In the extreme south-west of China and close to the Tibetan frontier, the China Inland Mission has maintained for many years an outpost station at Tachienlu. Mr. Theo. Sörenson, of the C.I.M., is now trying, with encouraging success, to reach Tibetan-speaking Chinese and trading Tibetans who reside in this town, from which the caravans start on their journeys to Lhasa. Though not very populous, Tachienlu is a great business centre, where Tibetans come from long distances to trade their wool and skins and gold for tea and clothing. Every day numbers of them may be seen in the streets, going from shop to shop examining the different goods for sale, or congregated on the square in front of the C.I.M. church, which is a favourite centre where the lamas who wish to hire themselves to say prayers in private houses wait to be hired. Thanks to

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the friendly help of the C.I.M. the Bible Society has now secured one of the rooms in this building, where a small stock of books will be kept prominently before the people. Thus our depôt is not only on the highway to Tibet, but at the very door through which any one going to the interior must enter. The "great Closed Land" is closed still. But the border country is opening more and more, and Tachienlu forms an admirable centre, from which last year over 2,300 copies of the Scriptures were put in circulation.

### **In Abyssinia.**

One nominally Christian country has remained for ages practically isolated from the rest of Christendom. But our reports have repeatedly mentioned the friendliness shown to the Bible Society by the Emperor Menelik, who has accepted and distributed gifts of Scriptures sent to him at his capital. The Rev. Karl Cederquist, of the Swedish National Society's Mission at Eritrea, is, however, the first Protestant missionary who has been permitted for many years to make anything like a stay in Abyssinia. He wrote in February, 1905, from Adis Abeba, asking for Bibles, Testaments, and Gospels to be despatched to him. Accordingly four cases of books were sent off from Alexandria; besides Gospels in other vernaculars of Abyssinia, such as Tigré and Bogos, the consignment included Bibles, Testaments, and Psalters in Amharic and Ethiopic, and contained altogether 657 volumes. The books travelled first of all from Port Said to Jibouti on the Red Sea; thence they were transported to Dire-dawa, and at length, after many months' delay, carried up to Adis Abeba by a friendly English caravan, reaching Mr. Cederquist nearly a year after he first wrote

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for them. A recent letter reports that he has sold practically all the Bibles and New Testaments in Amharic, and most of the Psalters in Ethiopic. At his request, more Bibles and Testaments in Galla are being sent out to Adis Abeba.

But if we can do little to enter this sealed land of Abyssinia, we meet and accost its pilgrims and exiles at many different points—in Egypt, at Aden, in the Sudan, and especially at Jerusalem, the holy place of all Christians. During 1905 the Bible Society's sales in Amharic, Ethiopic, and Galla numbered 1,252 volumes.

### “These Gospels will Remain.”

Even where Christian missionaries are allowed to settle in great pagan communities, they form at best a scanty band amid such teeming multitudes of untaught souls. But, as Bishop Welldon has said: “The Bible is the one silent, universal and irresistible missionary, on whose influence the Church can everywhere and always depend.” Among dim myriads of heathen folk the Four Evangelists are the only permanent evangelists who proclaim the love of God.

From Kathiawar, on the north-west coast of India, a missionary writes: “We had preached in a small village which no evangelist had visited for at least twenty years. After our addresses we offered for sale, as usual, the Bible Society's *pice* Gospels. A Brahman in the audience was displeased when he saw some of those, on whose charity and superstition his daily bread depended, stretch out their hands for the books. He said to us: ‘You will go, and they will forget what you said; but these’ (pointing to the Gospels) ‘will remain.’”

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### **Secluded Women in the East.**

Last year the Society supported 687 native Christian Biblewomen employed in connection with about forty different missionary organizations in the East. They carry the Gospel where no ordinary agents can gain an entrance. In the darkened chambers of Indian zenanas the devout Biblewoman with God's Book in her hand undermines the foundations of Hindu superstition ; while the same humble agent contends and prevails against the sorceress in Korea and the spiritualist in Brazil.

### **Neglected Countries.**

The silent influence of the Bible extends across wide regions where Christianity exists only under corrupt and superstitious forms, and indeed is sometimes little better than a name. Speaking at the Bible House in July, 1905, the Archbishop of the West Indies said :

“ I cannot think of any part of the world where the efforts of this Society in circulating the Holy Scriptures, by the various means that you ordinarily use in countries other than English, are more necessary than they are in the Spanish and French-speaking countries of Central America and the West Indies. I am thankful to know that in various quarters—British and American—a good deal is being done to promote the religious life of these countries, but I can assure you that the state of things there is deplorable in the extreme.”

### **The Perils of Colportage.**

In many parts of the world the Bible-seller has to face no small amount of hardship and persecution. We need only quote a few out of many instances recorded in last year's reports. In China, for example, piracy and brigandage are rampant in Kwongtung, whilst small



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robber bands infest the long, desolate roads in Kwongsai. Two of our men were "held up" by highway robbers, but on proving that they were booksellers were let off after paying a small sum of silver. Another colporteur was beaten for offering "foreign" books for sale at a place not very far from Canton. At Yachow our Sub-agent, Mr. Fergusson, was assaulted and his face cut open with a brick. In Turkish Arabia one colporteur was imprisoned, and another beaten by policemen. One of our Bagdad colporteurs was attacked by armed highwaymen while travelling in Persia, and narrowly escaped with his life.

Last summer the terror of plague lay heavy across the people of Northern India. Near Allahabad one of our colporteurs was severely beaten and much injured in a village, because the people feared that he was poisoning the wells to spread the plague. In many parts of that region village Christians have suffered greatly, as they are imagined to be the agents of the Government in introducing the dire disease.

In the interior of the Republic of Honduras, two of our colporteurs were detained in prison, until the kind intervention of the Salvadoreñan Minister of Foreign Relations secured their release. Colporteur Ramirez also was greatly hindered through the martial law which for several months was in force throughout that Republic. In Chile, Colporteur Pedro Navarro, a Spaniard by birth, has met with persecution from fanatics. In Santa Barbara, on offering the Bible to a man, he was at once clubbed to the ground, and rose only to be knocked down again. God gave him grace to show his furious enemy that the "heretic" had the spirit of forgiveness.

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In Bolivia, near Lake Titicaca, the highest lake in the world, Colporteur Felipe Muñoz visited the town of Tiahuanaco, famed for its prehistoric ruins, hoping to sell his books at a local festival of the Aymara Indians. Here he was shamefully mobbed, as a "freemason" and a "Protestant," and picked up insensible, almost done to death. With keen regret we record that one of our colporteurs, Juan E. Brandt, while Bible-selling in Southern Chile, was accidentally drowned in the Rio Bueno. He had thrown himself energetically into this pioneer colportage work, visiting outlying districts and circulating during his brief three months' service some eight hundred copies of the Scriptures. Among the last messages he sent us from the Book which he carried to his fellow-men was this: "The grace and peace of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all."

### **In Moslem Lands.**

For the past two or three years the internal condition of Morocco has made it well-nigh impossible to carry on Bible distribution. The towns on the coast have been visited, but itineraries among the villages and towns of the interior have been perforce suspended. From Fez, where our Sub-agent, Mr. Dermer, spent several months trying to establish a new depôt, he sends a pitiful account of what he endured from Moslem fanatics: "The violence with which the people treat me is affecting my nerves. Indeed, I can borrow the words of the prophet and say, 'I gave my back to the smiters, I hid not my face from shame and spitting.' Frequently I have been attacked by the people, and felt their rough hands on me as they dragged me like a beast. Almost every day have they spat on my face and clothes."



AMONG THE HEAD-HUNTERS IN BORNEO.  
Village House where the single men reside.



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Last year the Turkish Government imposed such new restrictions on the Society's colporteurs as would have effectually crippled their work. It is acknowledged that the Society's men and methods have been entirely free from political, controversial, or subversive meddling, and have been confined to distributing the Scriptures. In no case has any personal charge been brought against a colporteur. Yet our men have been detained in idleness, in some cases for many months, by provincial governors. The British Ambassador has been able, however, to induce the Sublime Porte to modify to some extent its policy of repression, and our warmest thanks are due to Embassy officials for their very valuable kindness.

### **Socialism and Superstition.**

In Central Europe, and especially in the German black-country, and in Alsace-Lorraine, we hear that Social Democrats and Anarchists are increasing in number. Socialism, unhappily, is becoming more and more identified with hostility to all forms of Christian faith. From Courland, for example, news comes that the peasants now talk "not only against the Government, but also against religion, and God, and the Scriptures." On the other hand, the influence of the Roman Church still remains, on the whole, bitterly opposed to the free circulation of the vernacular Bible, apart from ecclesiastical glosses and interpretations. Prelates and priests—especially those of the prevalent ultramontane type—oppose and denounce the colporteur and do their utmost to hinder his mission. Against forces like these the Society's agents often have no easy struggle.

### **Friendly Exceptions.**

We thankfully acknowledge, however, some golden

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exceptions to this normal attitude of Roman ecclesiastics. Word comes, for instance, from Brazil that in the city of S. Luiz de Carceres, not far from the capital of Matto Grosso, a colporteur sold £13 worth of Bibles in three days. Here the priest proved quite friendly, and declared that the Bible was very good, because it counteracted the influences of spiritualism and materialism which are so prevalent in Brazil. One of our Persian colporteurs recently made a journey to Senneh, in Kurdistan, where he was well received by the aged Roman Catholic Bishop and his monks, who, with a young Chaldean priest, a graduate of Paris, proved most kind and friendly: "They were very glad to know that we sold the Scriptures to the Kurds also, and the priest recommended me to the chief of the Kurds."

### **Religious Education among Chaldean Christians.**

It is interesting and instructive to learn that at the request of the Chaldean Bishop (who is in communion with the Roman Church) and his flock at Kerkook, one of the Society's colporteurs has for some years given a Bible lesson at their school for an hour every other day, without payment. These Chaldean Christians at Kerkook greatly appreciate the Society, and most of the readers used at their school are copies of the Scriptures in Arabic and Turkish which it has supplied.

### **The Roman Church and the Vernacular Scriptures.**

We rejoice once more to note an increasing readiness on the part of Roman authorities to popularize the Bible. The admirable new French version of the Bible by l'Abbé Crampon, translated from the original texts—not from the Vulgate—and revised by Jesuit Fathers and

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professors of the Seminary of St. Sulpice, has won such recognition and success that the first edition of 25,000 copies was disposed of before the end of 1905, and the book has just been reprinted.

For the last two or three years our Reports have recorded the splendid achievements in Italy of the beneficent *Society of St. Jerome*. More than 400,000 copies have now been printed and circulated of the volume containing the Four Gospels and the Acts, newly translated into Italian and issued from the Vatican press, which the St. Jerome Society sells at 20 *centesimi* (= 2d.) a copy. At certain churches in Rome, like the Church of San Marcello al Corso, this version is read and expounded every Sunday. One of the leaders of the St. Jerome Society, Padre Genocchi, has stated that they expect to issue the Epistles in this same version not later than October, 1906.

It is cheering indeed when at Florence, for instance, *La Stella Cattolica*, the weekly religious journal of the diocese, has a leading article entitled "The Reading of the Gospel" which begins thus: "There is among Catholics a vigorous revival of the dissemination and the reading of the Gospel;" and when, in the famous Church of Sta. Maria Novella, the Lenten preacher this year, at the end of each sermon, has recommended his hearers to buy and read the Gospels published by the St. Jerome Society.

The Roman Church in Brazil is beginning to follow along the same track. At Bahia the Franciscan monks have recently published a new Portuguese version of the Four Gospels and the Acts, each part of which is sold separately at prices varying from 5d. to 7d. apiece. Only last year another Portuguese translation of the Four

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Gospels, made from the Vulgate, appeared at Rio, in one handsome volume, with notes and illustrations, which costs, however, as much as 4s. This book has special significance, because it contains an introduction by the Archbishop of Rio, who has just been created Cardinal, and is the only South American prelate now in the Sacred College. His introduction ends with the following sentences: "All Catholic families should have in their homes the Book of the Holy Gospels. They should read it in common and meditate upon it. Let all pious souls take to their charge this holy and regenerating mission of propagating among all classes of society the reading of the Holy Gospels."

To this the Bible Society can most fervently respond: "We desire nothing better, we work for nothing less."

### **In the Russian Empire.**

Although no foreign missionary is allowed to reside and proselytize in Russia, there is an ancient and honourable tradition which secures a warm welcome and special facilities for the servants of the Bible Society throughout the dominions of the Tsar. More than seventy of our colporteurs are at work in this Empire of vast distances—where eight out of every nine people live in villages and small hamlets, often isolated by wide stretches of empty country. Most of these colporteurs are themselves Russian peasants, and devout members of the Russian Church. As they travel from place to place they live on the food of working folk—black bread, chiefly, with sour milk, and perhaps a bowl of cabbage-soup once a day. Thanks to the generous concessions of the Government and the railroad and steamboat companies, these men can travel free in any part of the



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country, while the Society's books are exempt from various taxes and duties and are carried for the most part without charge over Russian lines. The railway mileage put at the Society's disposal in the Empire of the Tsar, without charge for travelling or freight, amounts to a quarter of a million miles annually.

Thanks to the attitude of those in high places, our colporteurs have permission to sell practically everywhere. They go from one end to the other of the trains and the steamers, offering the Scriptures to passengers. They sell at the fairs, they sell in the monasteries, and from first to last they have seldom experienced anything but friendliness from the priests, the police, or the people.

In spite of political crises and social upheavals, the popular demand for the Scriptures in Russia shows no sign of slackening. During the month of May, 1906, three hundred cases of books were despatched from our St. Petersburg depôt to different parts of the Society's Russian Agency. This is the largest output ever recorded during a single month.

### **For Strangers in Strange Lands.**

No feature in the life of the world to-day is more impressive than the great, silent movements of population. Formerly emigrants would venture forth, like single spies, to seek their fortune. But now, common people have begun to migrate in battalions and crowds at once. Travel is made so cheap and easy that multitudes, of many races and many languages, set out each year to find new homes beyond the sea. Among these thronging emigrants the Bible Society finds its special opportunity. Alike on their journey and after they have settled, it offers

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them the Gospel in their mother-tongue. And to folk in exile, who feel themselves literally strangers and foreigners, the sight of God's Book, in the familiar type and speech of the native land they have left, comes with the same poignant appeal which long ago moved David to cry: "*Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!*"

As the peasants of Continental Europe flock to the seaports where they take passage for a new world, our colporteurs meet them before they set sail. At Hamburg, for example, 7,000 books were sold to emigrants last year. At Rotterdam special provision was made for Jews passing through from Russia, Poland, and Rumania. During 1905, over 200,000 Italian emigrants left Naples, where an Italian colporteur was busy on the wharves and on board the steamers. Gospels were provided for distribution to emigrants at St. Lazare station, Paris, and were sold in great numbers at Breslau railway station in Silesia, through which passed thousands of Galicians, Ruthenes, and other Slavs on their way to a foreign land.

### **In Greater Britain.**

The Bible Society, which has over 2,000 Auxiliaries and Branches in the British Colonies, does not neglect its duty to our own flesh and blood in the outposts of the Empire. By colportage and by liberal grants the Scriptures are distributed far and wide among British settlers on the Canadian prairies and in the Australian bush. Perhaps the problem of reaching emigrants will be best understood if we take two concrete instances—at Johannesburg and at Winnipeg.

## THERE IS A RIVER

### At Johannesburg.

It is astonishing to learn that from the Society's new depôt at Johannesburg the Scriptures were supplied last year in fifty-three different languages. One other language, indeed, was called for, which could not at the time be provided ; but we can hardly be charged with lack of foresight because in Central South Africa we did not anticipate a demand for the Icelandic Bible. Of this medley of fifty-three different tongues, twenty-one belonged to aborigines of South Africa, eighteen to Europe, and fourteen to Asia. The sales in English and in Dutch both exceeded 5,000 copies. Among the polyglot crowds which gather in the market-place and at the street-corners of the "Golden City," a Syrian colporteur sold 1,600 books in sixteen different versions.

### On the Rand.

Amongst the Chinese coolies in the mines 1,656 copies of Chinese Scriptures were circulated last year. Our colporteur has had but little difficulty in getting access to the compounds, and in general his work has been encouraged and even aided by those in charge. Many of the coolies themselves asked for the complete Bible in Easy Wênli and in Mandarin, and we are now able to supply this demand. Again and again, coolies who had received Gospels as gifts from the Society's agents in China on their embarkation have shown how gratefully the books have been treasured and used. The various Missions which have taken up work among these Chinese immigrants have found our depôt of very great assistance. The Chinese have much unoccupied time on their hands, and those who can read are often seen quietly studying the Word of God.

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Moreover, 108,000 native Africans were employed last year in the labour districts of the Transvaal. Within a few miles of our depôt there are natives who speak one or other of all the twenty-one African languages referred to above. From the extreme north of Nyasaland and the south of Cape Colony, from Damaraland in the west, and Portuguese East Africa and Zululand in the east, they are collected to do unskilled labour on the Rand. Here the Bible Society has a wonderful opportunity.

To provide these labourers with the Word of God, in languages spoken 800 or even 1,200 miles away, is to send them back home with an equipment of far-reaching possibilities. The Bible thus introduced will prepare the way for the future advance of the Christian Church.

It may be added that the Earl of Selborne, the High Commissioner, has become president of the Bible Society's Transvaal Auxiliary, and took the chair at its annual meeting at Johannesburg in August, 1905.

### At Winnipeg.

The cosmopolitan character of the immigrants who are now pouring into Canada may be judged from the fact that the Scriptures in forty-five different languages have been asked for at our depôt in Winnipeg. Of the 144,600 people who entered Canada last year, not less than 35,000 came from Continental Europe, chiefly from the backward and less-enlightened regions of Central Europe—Hungarians, Galicians, Poles, Russians, Ruthenians, besides Finns, Scandinavians, and numerous Italians. Some 70,000 Galicians are to be found west of Lake Superior. Winnipeg is the main point to which these motley new-comers converge, before they are distributed over the prairies. This open gateway to the





LUMBER-MEN IN THE WOODS, NEW BRUNSWICK.

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wide West occupies a commanding position for the circulation among the immigrants of the Scriptures in many foreign tongues. It is estimated that 100,000 people pass through the Canadian Pacific Railway station at Winnipeg in a single year. In the Immigration Hall, where thousands of polyglot strangers arrive and await dispersion, a Bible-stand has been erected with the assent of the Immigration Bureau. In the heart of that cosmopolitan crowd, forming a spectacle of unique and appealing interest, may be seen the Bible Society's colporteur offering the Scriptures in many different versions.

### **Among Galicians in Saskatchewan.**

Among the Galicians, who cover large tracts of country in Saskatchewan, a most interesting religious movement is now proceeding, namely, the spontaneous formation of an Independent Greek Church by the people themselves. Among thousands of these settlers the Reformation is now silently going forward. Some 25,000 of them are coming under the influence of this Independent Greek Church, which is organizing itself on the basis of a self-governing "Consistory," and is casting off the controlling hands of pope and patriarch. There are already about fifteen Galician preachers who have charge of thirty congregations, and do good service in circulating the Scriptures among their own people.

### **At Port Said.**

Every great harbour reproduces to some extent those cosmopolitan characteristics which belong to the centres of immigration. The most vivid illustration of the Bible Society's mission may be found at the wonderful water-gate between the East and the West at the entrance to

## THERE IS A RIVER

the Suez Canal. If we reckon up passengers and crews and troops on transports, it is estimated that over a million persons belonging to all nationalities and races, touched at Port Said in 1905. Here is a unique opportunity for Christian service, which only the Bible Society has learnt to utilize.

Our three colporteurs, who with their superintendent are always busy visiting the vessels in Port Said harbour, seem well equipped for their polyglot task. One is a German, who speaks not only his own language and English, but also Greek and Hausa, and can make himself understood, sufficiently for his purpose, in Arabic, Danish, Dutch, Italian, Spanish, and Swedish. The second, an Englishman, makes Arabic and Italian his special languages, but has also had considerable experience in Russ, Croat, Spanish, Portuguese, and French, to which he adds a useful smattering of Bengali, Gujarati, and Marathi. The third, a native of Ceylon, in addition to his own Sinhalese, speaks Arabic and English, as well as Tamil, Hindostani, and Bengali. Between them they are ready for most languages spoken on board ship, and it is not often they are all tongue-tied.

The Society's colporteurs visited 4,170 ships of all classes last year, while to the passengers and crews on board there have been sold altogether 10,160 volumes of the Scriptures in twenty-nine different languages and dialects—which were carried away forthwith to the very ends of the earth.



WATERS OF HEALING

SPIRITUAL religion finds its ultimate proof in the depths of spiritual experience. The challenge of Divine wisdom is not "O argue and reason," but "O taste and see." For the incontestable witness and warrant for God's living water must come from those men who have themselves tasted its living virtue to quicken and heal the soul. So the final evidence for the Bible—and the justification for the Bible Society—can be seen in that moral power which it exerts over the characters of faithful Christians. They are the highest of all critics, the real experts in Holy Scripture; and their verdict is enshrined in the hearts of Christ's little ones and written at length in the lives and deeds of His saints.

Year by year the Society accumulates fresh testimonies from many lands that the Scriptures, in whatever tongue they speak, are still able to make men wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. God's Book does not belong to scholars any more than it belongs to priests; it can come home to the minds of children who read the Gospel pages. In the words of the Bishop of Durham, "it is able to unveil its inmost secret, not necessarily to the elaborately instructed, but to the simple-hearted soul." When we are told that "there is no book in the world which so much requires expert interpretation as the Bible," we answer that God is His own interpreter,

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and we recollect how the first edition of Olivetan's French Bible in 1535 bore on its New Testament title-page this text: *They shall be all taught of God.* Last year a simple, unlettered Christian in Chehkiang, mistaking the Chinese word for *sacred* in the title of the New Testament, spoke of it as the "Heart Book"; while another declared that the proof of the Bible being divine was "its marvellous insight into men's hearts." "It has explained to me," said a Hunan scholar, "some of the sublimest things our Sage Confucius ever said. This doctrine of repentance and pardon is wonderful. Oh, if it had only come to me earlier! The Gospel has been heaven's gate to my soul!"

### **The Book which brought Happiness.**

Near Liège Colporteur Messoten sold a Testament two years ago to a woman who first objected: "I am much too poor to buy. My husband drinks the money away." "This Testament," said Messoten, "will teach you the way to peace and joy." Finally she bought it. Soon her husband began to read her book, and before long he resolved to go and listen to the Gospel. To-day both he and his wife are earnest and avowed Christians. "On one of my last journeys," says Messoten, "I knocked at the door of a house; it quickly opened, and I heard a man's joyful exclamation: 'Here is the first Christian who came to us, and sold us the Testament,' and he shook hands with me heartily. His wife took up the book I had sold her, saying, 'Here is this Holy Book which has brought us happiness.' Then her husband told me in detail about his conversion, and showed me the furniture he had broken in his drunken state, and how he had repaired it since. 'Ah,' he cried, 'how glad and thankful I am that I have come to know Jesus Christ!'"

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### The Effect of Reading the Gospel.

Here is the testimony <sup>1</sup> of a Sikh convert :—

“When I was a young man I used to hate the very name of Christian, and in the bazaars, when any missionary got up to speak, I used to throw stones and mud. One day I was much worse than usual; it was as if Satan had got possession of me, and I tried to make the missionary angry, but he answered nothing back. He seemed to be praying when he could not make himself heard, and I was afraid. I thought, ‘He is calling on his God to curse me.’ After the crowd had gone, he came up to me and said, ‘Why do you treat me so badly?’ I thought he would be very angry with me and said, ‘Why are you not angry with me?’ He said, ‘Because in our *Injil* (Gospel) it is written, “Bless them that curse you.”’ I said, ‘Sahib, they tell me that the *Injil* is an evil book, and that Christians are evil people, but that word, “Bless them that curse you,” is a good word.’ ‘Read the *Injil* yourself,’ he said, ‘do not trust what other people say.’ I took it and I read it, and you know what effect the *Injil* has. I soon became a Christian.”

### The Gospels in Korea.

Last autumn the venerable Primate of Ireland wrote :—

“The days were once for me when I thought that the Bible without the living voice of a missionary in the case of heathens, or of an existing interpreting Church in the case of Christian lands, might be looked upon as almost wasted. I have lived to hear of a whole body of people in Korea Christianized by the Gospel of St. Mark alone in their own language. I have reason to think that the conversion of a whole people may follow the distribution of a bag-ful of the Four Gospels translated into their own language. Such is the answer of fact to the speculations of criticism.”

<sup>1</sup> From ‘*The Mission Field*,’ August, 1905.

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Archbishop Alexander's letter receives vivid illustration from some sentences addressed to the Bible House from Songdo, Korea, dated March 1, 1906, by the Rev. C. T. Collyer, of the Methodist Episcopal Mission :—

“I am paying my first visit to the village of Syen-mi. Nearly seven years ago a man named Pak bought a copy of St. Matthew's Gospel from the Bible Depôt in Songdo. He comprehended very little and so put the book away, where for over five years it lay buried in dust. Latterly it was taken out and shown to friends. In this village there are now fourteen persons who have decided for Christ, and until recently the only light they had for their path was the copy of St. Matthew, bought seven years ago and lent round among them.”

### Kept by the Good Shepherd.

In *Saints and Savages*, the tale of five years in the New Hebrides, by Robert Lamb, we find the picture of a faithful Christian teacher named Tatu in Ambrym, defying by sheer faith the evil machinations of those about him. When they thought by *aple*, that is to say native magic, to deter him from his work of evangelization, he sat on his doorstep in the evening light and spelled the words on his favourite page of the Psalter—published by the Bible Society—*The Lord is my shepherd*, or, as the verse reads literally in his own tongue, *Jehovah keeps looking to protect me*. When the darkness settled close round their dwellings, he might be found with two or three younger companions sitting round the fire in his own hut, teaching them, and singing with them the native version of a familiar hymn in such words as these :—

*Jesus says to us, Shine your reddest light  
Like a glowing fire-stick in the blackest night,  
Dark is every village, therefore we must shine,  
You in your hut's corner, and I in mine.*

## THERE IS A RIVER

### Translated into the Kingdom.

Here is another example of the strange power of Scripture. The Rev. P. O. Bodding, who has translated the New Testament into Santali, was obliged last year to change his principal assistant, who had been a Christian Santal. With considerable trepidation and hesitancy Mr. Bodding engaged instead a heathen, a man somewhat better versed than his fellows in the idiomatic usages of the language, who held indeed a position of influence as the headman of a village in the Santal Pergannas. The Four Gospels had been completed and the new assistant sat day by day with Mr. Bodding while he was rendering the Acts and Epistles into Santali. As time went on the man became so thoroughly convinced of the truth of the Christian revelation that he asked for baptism and is now an earnest Christian, using all his influence as a humble disciple of our Lord.

### The Leper's Comfort.

Writing from the Methodist Mission, Loma Loma, Fiji, the Rev. Colin Bleazard describes the following experience which came to his notice only last April :—

“A few Sundays ago I went to preach at the back of the island and missed from my congregation a local preacher named Nathanael. On inquiry, I found that the native doctor had recently pronounced him to be a leper, and the *Buli* or ruler of the district had decided that he must be isolated. Accordingly the townsmen had erected a small house for him half a mile outside the town. Wife and children and relatives are all forbidden to come near him. Every day they carry food to within about thirty paces of the house, then they call to tell him that his food has been

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brought, and they must return to the village. However, I went on up to the house. He was greatly surprised to see me and wept with gratitude at my visit. We had prayer together, and I asked him if he were content with these strange solitary conditions under which he had to live. He took up his well-worn, dilapidated Testament and said amid falling tears : 'Sir, with this Book I am contented in my loneliness. This is my contentment. If I had not this Book to sustain me, I should be miserable indeed ; but with this Book I am content to remain where I am, for I gain from its words the daily comfort which helps me to bear easily what would otherwise be indeed a burden.' This Fiji New Testament, published by the Bible Society, constituted the leper's whole library."

### A Convict in Siberia.

In the third-class waiting-room at Omsk railway station, a poorly-clad man with haggard, wearied looks, bought a German New Testament, and then told the colporteur his story, not without tears :

"I am from the island of Saghalien, where I was sent for eight years' penal servitude. I am a Lutheran, and have served four years of this heavy punishment. I am an innocent man, and have had to suffer for some one else ; but I have sought strength and comfort in God's Word. You know the words in 2 Corinthians iv. 17 : *Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* These words give me courage and patience to carry my burden, and to hope for the life to come."

Such testimonies might be multiplied almost indefinitely. We have chosen only a few out of the great cloud of witnesses, at home and abroad, who speak from the fulness of their experience, and declare how the living

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water in God's river has become life and joy to their souls. A Brazilian farmer who had come into Rio from his home in the remote interior, brought out of his pocket one of the Society's small Testaments: "This is my guide," he said, "the only one I have, and I am putting all my trust in Jesus." In the hospital at Hiroshima, a Japanese soldier who lay recovering from typhoid spoke enthusiastically of what the New Testament had been to him when he read it by the bright autumn moonlight, encamped on the plains of Manchuria. "The book has been my comfort through my illness here in hospital, but it was best of all *there*."

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"O fountain of gardens, well of living waters, streams from Lebanon! How do you, the 'nether springs' of this world, bring to us something of the everlasting loveliness and peace of those 'upper springs' by which the beautiful flock now feed and lie down, none making them afraid."

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### GIFTS AND GRATITUDE

WE know enough about human nature to feel persuaded that any ordinary person is more likely to value and read a book when he has paid something in order to make it his own. The Bible Society, therefore, endeavours, as a rule, to sell the Scriptures at prices which put them within reach of the poor in every land, instead of scattering them broadcast by means of wholesale free distribution. Out of the total amount which the Society expends each year in preparing and distributing God's Word, about 40 per cent. comes back to it from the proceeds of sales.

Nevertheless, in the case of certain eminent personages, the open acceptance of a gift from the Society has a symbolic meaning and importance. Last year, for example, the Khedive of Egypt graciously accepted a magnificent Arabic Bible. The King of the Hellenes received an English Bible, with a copy of Nestle's edition of the Greek Testament, in remembrance of his visit to England. A presentation Amharic Bible was forwarded to Queen Taitu, the consort of King Menelik of Abyssinia. The New Testament in Korean "mixed script" was presented to the Emperor of Korea. During his mission to Japan Prince Arthur of Connaught accepted, "with much appreciation," a Japanese New Testament, printed and bound by native workmen. While the Chinese Commission visited London last spring the Duke Tsai Tsch and his two





*Photo by,*

THE TONGSA PENLOP OF BHUTAN.  
A Chieftain in the Eastern Himalayas.

*J. C. White, C.I.E.*



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colleagues accepted beautiful copies of the Wenli New Testament and the English Bible. A picturesque incident of the Indian tour of the Prince and Princess of Wales was the arrival at Calcutta of potentates from the Himalayas. Surrounded by splendid retinues, they descended from their mountain strongholds to meet the future Emperor of India. Copies of the Tibetan New Testament were presented to the Maharajah of Sikkim, who ranks first among native princes in Bengal ; and the Tongsa Penlop, who is the dominant feudal chieftain in Bhutan.

### **For Special Need or Calamity.**

In face of public trial or disaster the Society makes prompt and generous free grants to those in need. Last year, for instance, its colporteurs gave away French Testaments among the widows and bereaved families of the miners entombed by the terrible explosion at Courrières, in the north of France, and distributed Italian Gospels among the sufferers from earthquake in Calabria and from the eruption of Vesuvius. Testaments and Psalters were sent as gifts to the 626 lighthouse-keepers along the coasts of France and Belgium.

### **For Prisoners and Captives.**

The Society has always sought to place in prison cells the Book which speaks liberty to those whom Satan has bound. Thus our colporteurs regularly visit the islands in the Mediterranean where Italian convicts are interned. Last year 400 Gospels were given away among these unhappy *coatti*. In Siberia every prison has its library which our colporteurs replenish at stated intervals with copies of the Scriptures. They have also been allowed to distribute Testaments among convicts in the Siberian

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mines. Last year 580 Japanese Testaments were given away to criminals confined at Okayama, and 500 Chinese Testaments were presented for the use of prisoners in the new municipal gaol at Shanghai. One of our Sub-agents in China writes :—

“We visited the prisons at Loting, Saining, and Wuchow, and distributed Gospels among the prisoners. I have tried to do so everywhere, but find permission difficult to obtain. A Chinese prison beggars description : the tortures inflict awful wounds which, undressed, soon present a most sickening sight.”

During the war between Russia and Japan the Society gave away hundreds of thousands of Gospels and Testaments, with friendly official countenance and assistance, to the armies and navies of both nations. And after peace had been signed, the same work of distribution still went on among multitudes of the sick and wounded in hospitals, among Russian prisoners of war in Japan, and Japanese prisoners in Russia. When a detachment of Togo's sailors brought Japanese transports into the Thames last spring, each man received from the Bible House a Testament in his own tongue.

### For Indian Students.

The Society regularly presents the Scriptures to all students at Indian Universities. Each man, when he matriculates, is offered a copy of the Four Gospels and Acts in English ; half way through his course he is asked to accept the complete New Testament ; and when he has graduated, the Society endeavours to arrange that he shall go forth with the complete Bible in his hands. During last year nearly 6,000 volumes were thus distributed and gratefully accepted as gifts from the Society.

## THERE IS A RIVER

### For our own People.

These few examples may serve as specimens of the Society's giving. We must not forget that it spends over £10,000 a year in England and Wales by direct grants of Scriptures, free or at almost nominal rates, to numberless schools, hospitals, asylums, orphanages, and benevolent institutions of every kind. From this source each boy or girl sent out to Canada by Dr. Barnardo's Homes and similar philanthropic agencies receives a Bible as a parting gift.

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Year by year fresh expressions of gratitude for the Scriptures reach the Bible House in London from all corners of the earth. Those munificent gifts which completed our Centenary Fund, and the messages of congratulation thereupon which came from the rulers of every nation of the Reformed Faith, were really thanksgivings for the Bible. Sometimes gratitude takes curious forms. King Menelik once sent a pair of elephant's tusks from Abyssinia. Last year Prince Salah-ed-Dowleh, the third son of the Shah and Governor of Kurdistan, forwarded an autographed portrait of himself, with a unique silk carpet of Persian workmanship, "as a token of my goodwill and esteem towards your honourable Society." This Prince had previously accepted a presentation copy of the Persian Bible, which he keeps in a box of gold, made for that purpose. Sometimes converts in remote countries send touching words of gratitude for the Gospel. The native Christians in North Nyasaland wrote last autumn :—

"We, the people of Utengule, Nyasaland, ask you to accept our truly grateful thanks, because you have agreed to

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write the books for us (*i.e.*, the Gospel of St. Matthew in Nyasa-Nyika). Our special thanks are due to you because in your kindness you have worked out these books for us in our mother-tongue. This is why we people of Utengule—all of us—rejoice very much and send you our thanks. Your love to us is really great, and we have learnt that you love the people of all lands. Your benevolence is great ; it spreads over all the countries. God increase you more and more in His grace ! We, who have no wisdom, we of Utengule—all of us—greet you."

### Out of their Poverty.

But far more moving and pathetic than any words are gifts from the poor of this world, who are rich in faith and love. Bible Sunday was observed last year by eighty-four Chinese congregations—some of them only small groups of worshippers—who contributed altogether \$1,238.

The spirit in which they gave is illustrated by the following extracts : "After the collection another \$2 was sent in by a Chinese Christian, to show his gratitude for what the Bible has done." "A contribution of \$2 was saved out of weekly food allowance by ten schoolgirls." "A few Christians" sent \$4 ; "they were within the Russian lines and could not send it earlier." "Every penny of this sum (\$40) comes from our natives. Among them there are not many rich, but they were glad of another Bible Sunday." Sacred and precious beyond all the rest was the sum of 60 cents, found in the collecting box of Amy Machle, one of the party massacred at Lienchow.

This spirit of thankful, eager generosity breaks out in many impressive forms. At an orphanage in North India the boys denied themselves one meal for three Sundays, to give the price of the food to the Bible Society. Men,

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women, and children of the Danish Mission to the Santals were collecting for the Society for a month, the school-girls laying aside part of their rice to save money. The result was 6,000 *annas* (£25), "sent with heartiest greetings and prayers." In the Leper Asylum at Purulia for a week before Bible Sunday some of the lepers put by a handful from their daily supply of rice, others went without their dole of pepper or spices or tobacco, others saved a *pice* or two from their weekly pittance; after the collection an old man rose and said, "Write to the Bible Society *Sahib* and say that we have been *glad* in giving." . . . Our correspondent adds, "And so they were."

Since midsummer a negro in the island of Tobago wrote, "Please receive this 6d. It's my small gift that I give towards the Bible Society. *The gift is small, sir, but love is all.*" Surely that sixpence has found a place of its own, beside the widow's mite and the box of spikenard, in the treasury of the great King.

"The Kingdom of Heaven has no entrance fee, but its subscription is—all that a man hath." How far do we realise this awful and glorious secret of the Gospel? How deeply have we entered into this sacrificial passion which crimsones the pages of Holy Scripture? "If thou knewest the gift of God, thou could'st keep back nothing from God." The Love which passeth knowledge demands a gratitude which passeth limits. Indeed, the Heidelberg Catechism, one of the most typical documents of the Reformation, was bold enough to include the whole of Christian ethics under this heading of "Gratitude." When once Christian men and women have a profounder sense of their unspeakable debt to their Redeemer, and their imperious duty to publish abroad His Gospel, there will

## THERE IS A RIVER

be an end of deficits at the Bible House. We lose sight of human criticism, as we rend our hearts before that High and Holy Critic who meets our very gifts with His challenge : *How much owest thou unto thy Lord ?*

### **Proceeding out of the Throne.**

Finally, we remind ourselves that the source of the River is the Throne. The Bible Society was founded in an atmosphere of prayer by men who knew the mysterious power of intercession. To-day it has no other secret of fruitfulness and vitality. It can never exist on inherited spiritual capital, or advance by the momentum of its own past. It must live and move and have its being in perpetual prayers, answered by fresh influx of grace and energy from God. In Dr. Stewart's book, *Dawn in the Dark Continent*, he declares that "the force and expansive power of primitive Christianity depended at first, as they still depend, on its internal condition, that is, on its spiritual life." The Bible Society is one most characteristic and catholic form of the Church's missionary enterprise. And its friends dare not forget that "spiritual enterprises require spiritual conditions of the very highest force, and while the latter are wanting, the success desired may be wanting also." Amid the multifarious methods of a great institution, with its business details and financial cares, nothing can save the Bible Society from sinking into a mere machine for the distribution of useful literature, unless it be baptized continually in that same heavenly River which it exists to communicate, and renewed day by day in spirit by the powers of the world to come.



## APPENDIX.

## NOTICE RESPECTING REMITTANCES.

Subscriptions and donations are received at the Bible House, 146, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C. ; also at the Society's Bankers, WILLIAMS DEACON'S Bank, Limited, 20, Birchin Lane, E.C. ;—advice being sent to the Secretaries at the Bible House. Cheques, Bankers' Drafts, and Post Office Orders (*on the General Post Office*), should be made payable to *The British and Foreign Bible Society*, and addressed to the Secretaries.

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## FORM OF A BEQUEST TO THE SOCIETY.

*I bequeath the sum of* \_\_\_\_\_ *Pounds sterling,*  
*free of Legacy Duty, to "THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE*  
*SOCIETY," instituted in London in the year 1804, to be paid for*  
*the purposes of the said Society to the Treasurer for the time*  
*being thereof, whose Receipt shall be a good discharge for the*  
*same.*

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*Telegraphic Address :*

TESTAMENTS, LONDON.

*Telephone :*

NO. 2036 CENTRAL.

# BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

President: *The Marquis of Northampton.*

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\* Deceased since March 31, 1906.

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The Committee meet, as a rule, at the Bible House, 146, Queen Victoria Street, E.C., on the first and third Monday in every Month, at Half-past Eleven o'clock; and oftener, as business may require.

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- |  |   |
|--|---|
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|---|---|

Rev. H. Starmer,  
 12, *Cedar Road, Norwich.*

<sup>1</sup> Appointed January 1, 1906.

Mr. Robert F. Crosland,  
*Oldfieldnoo, Cleckheaton.*

<sup>2</sup> Appointed September 1, 1906.

## THERE IS A RIVER

### SUMMARY.

*I desire to protest against the unholy thirst for statistics : it is perfectly impossible to put into statistics the results of missionary work.*—THE EARL OF SELBORNE.

The British and Foreign Bible Society exists for one single object—to supply every man with the Holy Scriptures in his own mother-tongue. It concerns itself solely with circulating that Book which is the Charter of Christ's Church throughout all the world. And in this aim it unites Christians of almost every communion.

#### **The Year 1905-1906.**

Looking back across another year's labour we thankfully confess the good hand of our God upon the Institution which He has guided and prospered so wonderfully in years gone by. Foremost among our new mercies we reckon the completion of the Centenary Fund. The Society's great Thanksgiving in the Albert Hall, in November, 1905, had its echoes far and wide in many hearts. Messages of congratulation and goodwill from the rulers of every nation of the Reformed Faith came to confess the place which the Bible holds in modern Christendom.

Last year the Society issued over 5,977,000 copies of the Scriptures—complete or in parts. This total is 119,808 more than in 1904-5, and is 33,678 copies in excess of the highest annual total ever attained by the Society.

#### **The Work at Home.**

Of last year's issues, 1,331,130 books were in English or Welsh, and circulated mainly in the British Empire. This number is about 72,000 fewer than the figures for 1904-5. Of our English penny Testaments, 218,226 were issued, making a total of 8,591,107 during the last twenty-one years.

## THERE IS A RIVER

The English Scriptures issued last year included 131,500 copies of the Society's 6d. Bible ; 153,900 copies of the 10d. Bible ; and 10,650 copies of the 1s. Reference Bible. The issues included 29,709 Bibles and 9,013 Testaments in the Revised Version.

In England and Wales the Society spent about £10,000 last year, mainly in direct grants of Scriptures—free or at greatly reduced rates—to the schools and Home Missions of nearly every Christian Communion, and to all the varied agencies of religious and philanthropic activity.

Nearly all the English and Welsh Institutions for befriending the blind receive the Scriptures they use at half-price, in either Braille or Moon type.

Students at Theological and Missionary Colleges, who need such assistance, receive as gifts about eight hundred Testaments in Hebrew or Greek each year. The Society also presents out-going missionaries with Bibles or Testaments in the vernaculars of the fields in which they labour.

A large annual subsidy is given to the London Bible and Domestic Female Mission, which employs over 150 Bible-women and Nurses, who read and sell the Scriptures in the poorest districts of the Metropolis.

### Translation and Revision.

The Society's list of versions now includes the names of four hundred distinct forms of speech. This means the complete Bible in 102 different languages ; the New Testament in 94 more languages ; and at least one Book of Scripture in 204 other languages.

To print these languages over fifty different sets of characters are required. Eleven new names have been added to the list during the past year.

This branch of the Society's work cost £5,000 last year.

In embossed type for the blind the Society has helped to provide Scriptures in many languages.

## THERE IS A RIVER

### **The Partner of Missions.**

Its alliance with Foreign Missions was never more intimate. From it all British Foreign Missions must draw their indispensable supplies. No Missionary Society's request to print and publish a properly authenticated version of the Scriptures in a new tongue has ever been refused.

From the Bible Society the Church of England, with comparatively insignificant exceptions, obtains almost all the Scriptures required for its foreign missions.

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts has procured Scriptures from the Bible Society in sixty foreign languages; and the great majority of these are not obtainable elsewhere. The Church Missionary Society uses a hundred and four different translations, which come from the Bible House. Similar assistance is rendered to the Universities' Mission to Central Africa, the South American Missionary Society, and the Melanesian Mission.

Nonconformist Foreign Missions, with some slender exceptions, obtain the bulk of all the Scriptures they use, directly or indirectly, from the Bible Society.

It furnishes the London Missionary Society with the Scriptures in fifty different languages—and the Wesleyan Missionary Societies of Great Britain and her Colonies with over forty versions. Presbyterian Missions throughout the world use about sixty of its versions. It has published the Kongo version for the Baptist Missionary Society, and also supplies many of their stations in China and Jamaica. The China Inland Mission and other undenominational societies practically obtain all the Scriptures they ask for.

Plainly, each fresh advance in the mission-field creates an imperious demand on the Bible Society. As a rule, Scriptures for the foreign field are granted on such terms that they practically cost nothing to the missionary boards which receive them. At best, only a fraction of what the Bible Society expends on these missionary versions can ever come back to it as the result of sales.



## THERE IS A RIVER

### **In Foreign Lands.**

The Society maintains depôts in about a hundred of the chief cities of the world.

It employs 930 native Christian colporteurs who were at work throughout the year 1905—more than half of them in India and China—supervised by the Society's foreign Agents, or its missionary friends.

These colporteurs sold last year over 2,250,000 copies. The Society's grants for colportage during 1905 amounted to over £44,000.

It supports 687 native Christian Biblewomen, mainly in the East, in connection with forty different missionary organizations. The total annual grants for Biblewomen amount to about £6,000.

### **Retrenchment and Reorganization.**

By revising the Society's methods considerable economies have been effected both in administration and distribution. Thus by aid of the telephone and the parcel post, it is possible to dispense with not a few outlying depôts in foreign countries. Certain Agencies, again, have been amalgamated under single management. Thus North and South Malaysia are now both supervised from Singapore; Brazil and the Argentine, both from Rio. Our work in Spain has the same headquarters as our work in North Africa. Central America and the West Indies are alike controlled from Jamaica.

In carrying out the retrenchments to which they are driven, the Committee have unfortunately been compelled in some Agencies even to reduce the staff of colporteurs; and this reduction has necessarily involved a corresponding lessening of distribution.

In North America all the Society's different Auxiliaries from Newfoundland to Vancouver are now happily federated into one Canadian Bible Society, Auxiliary to the Parent Society in London. In Australia the same unifying tendency

## THERE IS A RIVER

appears, and our Auxiliaries are drawing together into a common unity for each State.

A successful journey among the Society's principal Auxiliaries and Agencies in the East was made during the year by the Rev. Arthur Taylor. We congratulate him, and ourselves, that he has brought home the promise of permanent results from his visit.

After careful consideration the Committee have resolved to throw open the Society's business to the book-trade generally. This fundamental change of method will gradually supersede the Society's system of Auxiliary depôts; but it has already led to wider circulation, and at lower cost.

### **The Centenary Fund.**

Part of the Centenary Fund is being utilized to provide the Society with its own foreign depôts at important centres in British territory, or at treaty-ports, where rents have been a heavy burden on our ordinary fund and are rapidly becoming prohibitive. A considerable sum has already been spent on reorganization in our Colonies, on colportage in the East, and on translation work. The interior of the Bible House in London has been altered so as to secure increased office accommodation and concentration in each department.

### **Auxiliaries.**

The Society has about 5,800 Auxiliaries, Branches and Associations in England and Wales, where 4,526 meetings were held and 2,548 sermons preached on its behalf during 1905. These figures show an increase of 348 meetings and 791 sermons on the previous year's totals.

Outside these islands the Society has more than 2,000 Auxiliaries and Branches, mainly in the British Colonies, many of which undertake vigorous local work besides remitting Free Contributions to London.

## THERE IS A RIVER

### Finance.

The Society's income in 1905-1906 from all sources, apart from the Centenary Fund, was £231,964; while it spent £238,632. This leaves, on the year's working, a deficit of £6,667. Although such a sum appears less alarming than the deficit of £35,233 announced a year ago, this is the eighth time in succession when the Society's accounts have closed with a balance on the wrong side. During the last eight years expenditure has exceeded income by £119,000.

A heavy debt has been avoided only by continued drafts on the Society's working capital. This capital is now so dangerously depleted that the Committee dare not draw upon it further. Nor can they look for help to the Centenary Fund, which from the first was definitely allocated to reorganization and aggressive enterprise, and cannot be applied to the ordinary, existing work of the Society. Accordingly, the Committee have already begun to cut down their outlay in important provinces of the foreign field—at least until the income at their disposal shows a decided advance.

### The Society's Appeal.

The Society's financial position can never be satisfactory until the contributions from its friends throughout the country keep pace with the growth of its work. During the last forty years the Society's circulation has increased 90 per cent. ; but the contributions, paid through our Auxiliaries, have increased only 10 per cent. Will not friends and lovers of the Bible lay these facts seriously to heart, and send the Society that yearly help for lack of which it begins to be crippled?

Christian men are not impoverished. A penny in the income tax yields to-day half as much again as it did forty years ago. Our countrymen were never so wealthy, so luxurious. Yet the Bible Society, on which all other Missions depend, must still describe itself

AS POOR, YET MAKING MANY RICH.

# THERE IS A RIVER

## CONDENSED STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDING

### RECEIPTS.

#### FROM SALES OF SCRIPTURES.

Trade Depôts, Auxiliary and other			
Societies ... ..	£44,197	6	7
Sales in Society's Foreign Agencies ...	54,006	10	9
		98,203	17 4

#### FREE INCOME.

Free Contributions, Annual Subscriptions, Donations, Collections and Special Funds ... ..	92,813	17	7
Legacies (paid in London) ... ..	35,925	3	11
Dividends on Stock, Interest, Exchange, &c. ... ..	5,021	11	5
	231,964	10	3
From Reserve Fund ... ..	6,667	10	0
	£238,632	0	3

## THERE IS A RIVER

AND PAYMENTS OF THE BIBLE SOCIETY.

MARCH 31ST, 1906.

### PAYMENTS.

For translating and revising the Scriptures and for paper, printing and binding ...	£108,464	17	1
For rent, taxes, establishment, &c., of over 100 Depôts and Warehouses in the chief cities of the world, grants to other Depôts, salaries of foreign Agents, Depositaries, &c. ... ..	55,184	0	8
Towards maintenance of (930) Colporteurs and (687) Biblewomen ... ..	43,676	7	5
For home establishment, officers, district sec- retaries, travelling, reports, literature, staff needed for the despatch of Scriptures from London, and grants to assist kindred socie- ties in Bible distribution ... ..	31,306	15	1

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£238,632    0    3

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